

Interview with William Bodde Jr.

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR WILLIAM BODDE, JR.

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial interview date: October 5, 1998

Copyright 2006 ADST

Q: Today is the 5th of October, 1998. This is an interview with William Bodde, Jr.

BODDE: Right.

Q: And I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy, and this interview is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. All right, well, let's start at the beginning. Could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family?

BODDE: Yes, I was born in Brooklyn, New York, on November 27, 1931, but grew up in Huntington, Long Island. My father was a blue-collar worker.

Q: What type of work was he doing?

BODDE: He was a letterer and striper, you know, that is sign painting on vehicles and striping. In those days, they didn't have chromium on the cars, and so they used to stripe them. They still do on hot rods and fire engines and detailed stuff now.

Q: It takes a very steady hand.

Library of Congress

BODDE: It's a special skill. He was self-educated and an extremely well read person. He talked to me about world affairs and politics from when I was a little boy on.

Q: Your mother?

BODDE: My mother was Irish and from Brooklyn. Although my father was born in Holland and emigrated to the United States as a teenager, my mother was more Irish than he was Dutch because she grew up in an Irish neighborhood and so on. My wife claims it's an impossible combination of stubbornness: Irish and Dutch. She's probably right.

Q: What about growing up in Huntington? What was Huntington like?

BODDE: Huntington was neat because it was rural in those days. My father was probably one of the first of a handful of people who commuted into the city in those days. He worked for the Brooklyn Union Gas Company. My mother could never understand why I didn't take a job with the Brooklyn Union Gas Company, a good steady job, you know. But anyhow Huntington was wonderful because although it was rural it was situated in the New York Metropolitan Area. It was sort of plugged-in, so to speak. We read the New York papers and listened to the New York radio stations. It was a nice place to grow up. Huntington had 35,000 people then and now has at least 100,000.

Q: What about school, elementary and then on?

BODDE: I went to a small elementary school. In fact, the first one I went to was just one step up from the proverbial one-room schoolhouse. To create an auditorium, they opened a wall between two of the classrooms and packed all four grades in. Then I went to a somewhat larger one, and on to a small high school, South Huntington High School. It is now called Walt Whitman High School, after Huntington's most famous son. We had 257 students in all with 30 in my graduating class.

Library of Congress

Q: During your education at the elementary and high school level, what were your interests?

BODDE: Well, I was a typical American kid, I played football. In fact, I was captain of the football team, which would be really something, except that it was a lousy small school team. I did all the stuff that an average American teenager did. But because my father was European he didn't have any feeling for American sports. He was also very handy and could do things like repair radios and cars. I wasn't interested in home repairs although later as a homeowner I was sorry I hadn't learned more from my dad. Our meeting ground was made up of books, politics and world affairs. We spent many hours late into the night discussing world events. When I was in the embassy in Bonn and my father had been dead for many years, I got a Superior Honor Award for my political reporting. At the ceremony I told my colleagues that, "My father wouldn't believe I get paid to do what I do here." I owe my everlasting interest in politics to him. He read a lot, and he got me in the habit.

Q: Could you give me some ideas, in the first place, about some of the kids' books or young people's books? Do any of those come back to you that you liked?

BODDE: Yes, sure, I read the Hardy Boys and I listened to the radio. In those days it was Jack Armstrong, All-American Boy; The Lone Ranger; and all those things. Of course, we went to Saturday afternoon movies and to see the serials, which we called "the chapters." They included, "Dick Tracy", "The Lone Ranger", "The Invisible Man", etc. At 12 or 13 I started reading more adult books, you know, or at least not kid's books. I also read comic books and a lot of pulp literature in the form of idealistic sports stories that were published in monthly magazines, printed on cheap paper. They only had about three plots, you know.

Q: The kid comes to the big team and

Library of Congress

BODDE: You've got it. Or the bonus baby who hasn't panned out but finally proves himself, or the veteran that's being pushed out and plays that one last great game. You probably read the same ones. They were this sort of Horatio Alger saga. I, like most people never read Horatio Alger, but I think that they were that kind of thing. You know, virtue is rewarded; good guys win in the end. Because I was a Brooklyn Dodger fan, the sports stories were right up my alley.

Q: What about a minor thing that was going on in the time you were in Huntington, and it was called World War II? Your father, particularly, from the Netherlands and all this, how did this - did this have an effect on you?

BODDE: Oh, sure. My father had been wounded in the First World War, while serving in the American Army. He was too old for the Second World War. But of course, he was very caught up in what was happening. He had left Holland when he was a teenager, and had lost contact with his family. After the war he tried, through the Red Cross, to find them, but had no luck. I don't know why he lost contact. It could be that he felt he hadn't been successful enough or whatever. The story has a happy ending, however. Many years later when I was in the army in Germany, and I went on leave to Holland, through a girl I met there I located his family, and he got back to see them before he died.

World War II is a big thing in our life. At that time every kid followed the war. Long Island was full of truck farms in those days so we got off from school to pick crops because the people who would normally do it were away in the service. World War II was a big thing, and a formative thing in a kid's life. I went in the army later during the Korean War. Years later, when I was involved with the South Pacific, I got to visit many of the famous battlegrounds of W.W.II such as Tarawa, Kwajalein and Guadalcanal

Q: Oh, yes.

BODDE: Of course, the names meant something to me.

Library of Congress

Q: I'm slightly older than you. I was born in 1928, and there was a wonderful sense of world geography.

BODDE: That's right. We got a geography lesson.

Q: You could tell where Iwo Jima was and Wake Island and Novorossiysk and on and on.

BODDE: Exactly. In Fiji my wife and I would go out into the bush to visit villages. We would meet the village headman or chief and maybe the minister and the schoolteacher. Often there would also be some old men there to greet us. They would dress up for the occasion. In Fiji they wore lava-lavas you know, sarongs, and they usually wore tattered white shirts. On their chests would be their medals from the Second World War when they served as scouts with the American troops at Guadalcanal.

Q: Oh, boy.

BODDE: I used to get choked up.

Q: Absolutely. Coming out of this, while you were in high school, did you have any of your teachers sort of particularly strike you or get you inspired?

BODDE: Oh, yes. South Huntington was not a very good high school, and I was not a very good student, I must say. The high school was small and the role models were more or less juvenile delinquents. Athletes were also role models and certainly being a so-called "brain" was not the thing to be. I had a few good teachers. One social studies teacher in particular was inspiring. He was very liberal in a very Republican and conservative town, so he didn't stay but for a few years. My father inspired me to take an interest in social studies.

Library of Congress

Q: Well, as I do these oral histories, for the men, anyway, the predominant theme if you want to be a successful Foreign Service Officer in high school one should major in sports and girls.

BODDE: I was more successful in sports than I was with girls. In fact, I was thinking how much nicer life is as an adult than as a teenager, with all the insecurities about this, that, and the other. But I didn't know what a Foreign Service Officer was when I was in high school. When I was in the army I used to talk with my buddies, and we used to talk about maybe becoming foreign correspondents. That was about as far as our imaginations stretched. Now when I went to school, especially in a school like mine and a neighborhood like I grew up in, you were considered a success if you graduated from high school. In the 1930s many of my neighbors didn't even do that because they had to quit and go to work during the Depression. Very few went off to college. It was a minority. If you went to college your aspirations would have been limited to becoming a schoolteacher. That would have been the height of your aspirations.

Q: Well, you graduated from high school when?

BODDE: 1950.

Q: 1950, so this again was a good year to graduate.

BODDE: Yes.

Q: So what happened?

BODDE: I started at Hofstra College. I went for a semester, and I wasn't settling down very well, although I was enjoying myself. And of course, that was, as you intimated, the height of the Korean War. Like many guys I wanted to join the Air Force so I wouldn't be drafted in the Army. But there's a waiting list for the Air Force, and between my two sisters nagging "When is Billy going to get a job?" and the boredom of hanging around, I decided

Library of Congress

the hell with it. I went down and signed up for three years in the U.S. Army. When I started basic training I thought I wanted to be a paratrooper. By the time I was through basic training I had figured out that was not very smart. I was very lucky because there were 220 people in my basic training company and 200 of them went to Korea. I'm sure many of them were killed or wounded because at the time they were pouring replacements right into the front lines. That was in 1951 and the situation was grim

I went to Europe and I was assigned to an armored infantry battalion in the 2nd Armored Division. It didn't take me very long to figure out that I didn't like the army at all. I didn't like obeying orders and being in an infantry outfit wasn't that much fun. But after a while I was able to get a job teaching in the education center.

Q: Where were you stationed?

BODDE: The oldest city in Germany, Worms, the city of Martin Luther and the Diet of Worms. That's what really changed my life, because when I was teaching I met my wife-to-be. She was working as a secretary/interpreter for a lieutenant colonel who was in charge of all the installations. The German secretary at the education center kept telling me about the nice German girl she wanted me to meet. Of course, I had grown up, as you can imagine with a Dutch father during the Second World War, in a very anti-German atmosphere. To make matters worse I was all of 20 years old and full of nonsense. I would tell the secretary that I didn't want to meet any nice German girls I wanted to meet the other kind! She persevered and finally the three of us went out to dinner.

Q: Your wife was German.

BODDE: She was born in Germany and went to school, we later joked, for a thousand years, because she went to school from '31 to '45, during the period of the Thousand-Year Reich. My first remark over dinner was, "I want you to know that I don't like the Germans very much." And she responded, "Well, I'm not that impressed with the Americans." That was exactly what I needed. Anyhow, she had been married before, and I told her I was

Library of Congress

never getting married, so within a year we were married and leaving for the United States. She had a daughter, Barbara, from the first marriage whom I adopted. She was six years old at the time. Within the first year we had another child so our economic situation was tight. With two kids obviously my first priority was to get a job and worry about going back to college later. I got a job in advertising production at the Long Island daily, Newsday.

Q: Of Long Island.

BODDE: Yes, a Long Island newspaper. After about six months my wife, Ingrid, had secretly saved up the money so that I could go back to school part time. I worked nights from 4 pm to 12 am and went to school during the day. My wife, Ingrid, was remarkably supportive and a wonderful helpmate. I went to school fulltime and worked fulltime.

Q: Where were you going to school?

BODDE: Hofstra College, now Hofstra University. I'd leave the house at 7:30 in the morning and get back at 1:30 the next morning. People ask, "How did you do it," but when you're young, you're tough, and I knew what I wanted out of life. I wanted to do something that would be meaningful and intellectual. Our son, Peter, had spinal meningitis when he was seven months old and required brain surgery. So on top of everything we went into a big-time debt! He's a Senior Foreign Service officer now, believe it or not. In fact, those years were difficult and I wouldn't have gotten through them without Ingrid's enormous support.

I finished college in 1961 (it took me five years to go through school).

Q: Hofstra - is this a Catholic school?

BODDE: No, no, it's a secular school. It was one of the first post-war, suburban commuter colleges. Like Huntington, Hofstra benefited a great deal from being located in the New York Metropolitan Area. The college was able to attract faculty who wanted to be near

Library of Congress

New York City, and it had a large pool of bright kids to draw on. In those days you couldn't get into City College unless you were very smart, and Hofstra got the ones who just missed getting into CCNY [City College of New York]. Hofstra was a pretty good school with good professors. I did a split major, political science and history.

Q: Did you find that the faculty there was coming at political science from any direction? I mean, this is slightly after the McCarthy time.

BODDE: I went there during the McCarthy period. In fact, when I started at Newsday the McCarthy witch-hunts were at their height. At the time, The New York Times fired an editor who had been attacked by McCarthy. I remember talking to a reporter at Newsday about it and we were both appalled by the NYT's lack of courage. The political science faculty was liberal. The head of the department became the dean of the graduate school of political science at Syracuse University. Later he was Deputy Comptroller of New York State and he headed the Civil Service Commission in the Carter Administration. They were a bit old fashioned and still taught things like voting behavior while some other institutions were turning to mathematical modeling. But it was a good faculty.

Q: While you were there were you getting any ideas of what you wanted to do with this?

BODDE: Yes. Well, I knew I wanted to go into public service. My relatives, particularly on my mother's side thought a career in the government was good because you had security and got a good pension. I looked down on that sort of thinking. I would tell them that I'm not interested in a pension. I want to change the world. Now I am very interested in our pensions and I'm very happy that it's as good as it is. Before graduating, I took all sorts of government exams such as the Federal Management Intern exam. I took the Foreign Service exam, and I even took the New York Port Authority exam. I passed them all but I didn't know that you could request them to move up your oral exam. The Foreign Service was my preference although I didn't have any idea precisely what a Foreign Service Officer (FSO) did. So I left Newsday, and took a job with the Housing and Home Finance

Library of Congress

Agency (HFA), which later became HUD (Housing and Urban Development). I was a management intern, but I knew I really wanted to go into the Foreign Service. After some months later, I was called for the oral exam. In those days they told you how you did right after you took it. That's really a neat idea. I don't think they do any more.

Q: I think they switch. I think they are now, but for a long time you were assessed or something and the whole idea was to make it as foggy as possible how the decision was reached.

BODDE: So they came out and told me I passed and of course I was elated. Then for months and months I didn't hear anything. I was quite happy at HHFA and had almost put the idea of becoming an FSO out of my mind. Then out of the blue I got a call from the State Department saying we want you to start in two weeks. A typical case of State Department arrogance. I told them that I would have to think about it. I went home. That night after dinner when the four of us were sitting around the table, I said, "By the way, the Foreign Service called today, and they want me to start in two weeks." One kid asked, "Where are we going?" and the other asked, "When are we going?" and my wife said, "We are going, aren't we?" I replied, "I guess we are." You know the Foreign Service is like a beautiful woman you have been pursuing and who has played hard to get. Finally when she says "yes," you have no choice. Do you know what I mean? I talked to a couple of people who were in the service, but in my heart I was basically committed to come in, no matter what. I became a Foreign Service Officer in April 1962.

Q: Do you recall how the oral exam went? Do you recall any of the questions?

BODDE: I was relaxed because I was not feeling I've got to ace this thing. They asked me about what I was doing, and that was just great. I had a chance to talk about all the things we were doing to save our cities and encourage mass transportation, etc. So it was not a terribly stressful exercise. I remember the chairman was former Ambassador Homer Byington. He was born in Naples and he later was consul general there.

Library of Congress

Q: Oh, yes. I was consul general in Naples at one point, and I think three Byingtons were associated with Naples. I mean they sort of had retired the cup.

BODDE: The A-100 course, at the time, was terrible. One had sleep apnea and fell asleep even in small groups and the other FSO was a very bureaucratic type. They were just the worst possible role models.

Q: When did you come in?

BODDE: It would have been April '62. It was the first class that they brought junior officers in with experience at the FSO-7 level rather than bringing in everyone at the FSO 8 level. So most of the class was somewhat older and not just out of college. Many of us were getting in just under the age limit of 31. Consequently, we were more independent, and revolted against all the Mickey Mouse nonsense. Not surprisingly, there was a constant tension between the people running the course and the people in it. I think they've improved the A-100 course since then.

Q: What was the composition of your basic officer course? Older?

BODDE: You mean in the class.

Q: Yes.

BODDE: They were older. Most of us had worked at something or done something after graduating from college. Many of them had been in the service. A typical example is a good friend of mine, Jim Wilkinson. He was in the U.S. Army in Berlin listening to the Russians in East Germany. There were only a couple of young ones. There were a few Ivy League graduates, but most of them were not. In fact, I was going to ask you. The generations before us in the Foreign Service were very Ivy League.

Q: Oh, fabulously.

Library of Congress

BODDE: And when you talk to them, it's to the manor born. I think we were among the first to benefit from the democratization of the Foreign Service.

Q: Well, another thing that I've noticed, too, is that sometimes the Ivy League gets a bad name because a considerable number of those who went to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and all were actually coming from rather modest families but World War II had opened their eyes and they had the GI Bill, and those schools, you know, I mean, you could get in, so it was a certain meritocracy. That World War II generation got in from people who would have never gone otherwise.

BODDE: You are right. The GI Bill changed America and changed the Foreign Service.

Q: But if you're talking about the '30s and all, yes, very much so.

BODDE: I remember. My first boss was Jimmy Riddleberger. He was the senior career ambassador in the Foreign Service and a wonderful man who, with unbelievable patience, taught me the ropes. He was a southern boy from modest circumstances who came in the Service before the war. Riddleberger loved to tell the story how when they were in Berlin, George Kennan talked him out of going on home leave first. Kennan went on home leave and after Kennan returned the Riddlebergers went on home leave. While they were gone war broke out and Kennan was interned with the rest of the embassy staff. In those days you had to pay your own transportation to your first post. To get around the requirement, the Department assigned many officers to Canada for their first month and then transferred them at government expense.

We had a rather large dropout rate in my A-100 class. A couple actually dropped out during the course, and within ten years, half of them had gone. What was interesting to me was that there was a consensus among my classmates as to who among us were going to be ambassadors. By and large the consensus was wrong. We had some very good people in our class; still, out of thirty people only fifteen stayed beyond ten years.

Library of Congress

Q: Any women or minorities?

BODDE: We had the first black woman FSO, but she did not stay. She was assigned to Latin America and was unhappy. I don't remember if she went to post or resigned before. She was the only black person in the class. We had five women in the class. One of the first to leave was a lawyer in the class. He had been a very successful trial lawyer, and then bridled under that kind of slow progress and menial work they make you do as a junior officer in the Foreign Service. They don't give you very much responsibility early on in the Foreign Service, and for those who had considerable responsibility before coming in it was very frustrating. I was a corporal in the army, but some of my classmates had been lieutenants or even captains. They wouldn't have that much authority or lead that many people again until they got to be senior FSOs.

Q: Oh, absolutely.

BODDE: I would say three or four in my class became ambassadors.

Q: Did you have any thought about - in the first place - how about language? Did you have a language under your belt?

BODDE: Well, I am not a natural linguist, and I had a terrible time. I took German in college, and the minute I finished my two-year German requirement I became a straight-A student. They gave me German training after the A-100 class. I was in German training, but I was supposed to go to Zagreb, Yugoslavia. The rationale was that German was the second language in Zagreb. Fortunately, they switched my assignment at the last moment. We had two school-age kids, and my wife would have had to teach them at home. Instead we were assigned to Vienna, which was of course much nicer and much better for learning German. It took me years to really master German. I finally got my 4/4 in German after serving in Berlin and Bonn where I had a couple of jobs that forced me to speak German more than I spoke English.

Library of Congress

Q: While you were getting your training, did you go through the consular training?

BODDE: Yes.

Q: How was that?

BODDE: Interestingly enough, it was probably the best part of the A-100 course. I don't remember the man's name any more, but he was a consular officer, obviously, and very good. Unlike a lot of the course, the consular training was real and many of us would actually have to use what we learned. The law was very complicated and very conservative. The regulations reflected the McCarran Act and Francis Knight was the head of the Passport Office in those days. At the end of the training you took an exam, so you had to learn it. Most of the A-100 class was a waste of time. It was mostly show and tell by bored bureaucrats. It was not very intellectually stimulating. I've never done consular work, although I was appointed consul general in Frankfurt. I felt a little guilty about that. I signed one passport in my life. But the course was good. And I found being consul general a fascinating job. The present head of the Consular Bureau, Mary Ryan is a good friend. She is a super officer and has done wonders for morale in the consular cone. We were all delighted to see her make career ambassador.

Q: She is the head of Consular Affairs, Assistant Secretary. Well, you were in Vienna from when to when?

BODDE: I was in Vienna from 1962 to '65.

Q: What was your job?

BODDE: In those days junior officers were carried on a central compliment in Washington and rotated among the sections at post. Well, I started out in the commercial section. When I was finished my six-month tour in the commercial section and was moving to the political section I was also appointed staff aide to the ambassador. As a consequence the

Library of Congress

other junior officers were frozen where they were. Because I was staff aide, I spent three years in Vienna instead of two years.

It was a wonderful assignment because, among other things, they had a system in Vienna whereby the staff aide was control officer for all visitors, no matter how high their rank or status. The appropriate senior officer would deal with the substance of the visit but the staff aide would make all the arrangements and accompany the visitor on most occasions. Vienna was a very popular place for VIPs to visit, so I got to meet a lot of famous people.

Q: How did James Riddleberger, one of the major figures of the Foreign Service, how did he operate?

BODDE: You know, he had seen it all. He had been Murphy's deputy after the war, first in Frankfurt, then in Berlin. Later he was an assistant secretary and served as Ambassador to Yugoslavia and Greece. He was appointed the director of the International Cooperation Administration, the precursor of AID. Riddleberger had seen and done it all, and he was a wonderful person. People told me he was much tougher and demanding when he was younger. If so, he had mellowed, and he was a great mentor and teacher. He was not able to steer my career because he retired after Vienna but he taught me so much that I will be forever grateful.

He would sit around and talk about World War II and the big political decisions such as the division of Germany into occupation zones, currency reform and the Berlin airlift. He was a very traditional Foreign Service officer, but he was just great. He had a secretary, Francine, who was sort of de facto DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission). It's interesting, looking back, at his relationship with his DCM. I can't imagine that he chose the DCM personally because they had a correct but not a warm relationship. The DCM wasn't his alter ego or anything like that. In fact, the DCM would use me to find out what was happening or what the Ambassador was thinking. Riddleberger was a historical figure, and one of the high points of my career was that he was there when I was sworn in as ambassador to Fiji.

Library of Congress

Q: From your perspective, what was the situation in Austria in the '63-'66 period?

BODDE: Well, of course, they had the State Treaty where it became -

Q: '55?

BODDE: Yes, while we were there they celebrated the tenth anniversary of the State Treaty. The "Big Four" foreign ministers attended the ceremonies. Of course we didn't have a Soviet presence in Vienna like they did right after the war the "four men a jeep" time. Yet it was still very much a player in the Cold War, and we had an enormous CIA station. The Soviets also had an enormous intelligence operation, so there was a lot of East-West stuff going on. I used the staff aide position to give me entrée, and Ingrid and I made a lot of friends. I was able to establish a staff aide network that included the chancellor's and foreign minister's staff aides. As is often the case in small countries these people ended up running the country twenty years later. This made it very nice when I would go back later when I was DAS (deputy assistant secretary) in EUR (Bureau of European Affairs) and all my old friends had moved considerably up the ladder.

But Vienna was a delightful place, and of course, the dollar was king then. As a third secretary we didn't have a tremendous amount of social obligations. That left us time to get heavily involved in the rich cultural life of Vienna. We had season tickets for a string quartet and went to symphony concerts all the time. The embassy had a box at the Vienna State Opera and the staff could buy tickets very cheaply when the senior officers weren't using it for representation. Vienna has become very expensive. In the 1980s, when Ron Lauder, the heir to the cosmetic fortune, was ambassador the embassy could no longer afford the box. But when we were there you could use the two back seats in the box for \$20. So we saw a lot of operas. Got to see and hear many of the world's great conductors and composers including Paul Hindemith, Leonard Bernstein, Bruno Walter, etc. The ambassador was a great opera fan and he gave lunches or dinners for all the American opera stars who appeared in Vienna. As my German got better I could enjoy the theater

Library of Congress

and cabarets. It was a unique cultural experience. We got there right after the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting.

Q: Were you getting any feeling about the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting? Were they talking about it?

BODDE: Sure they were, but not many people were in the room when the two met so after a while what you've read and what you heard gets mixed up. I think I've probably read more than I heard about what actually happened. It seems that Khrushchev completely misgauged Kennedy at that meeting. I remember one story I heard from the Consul, Dick Strauss. A native German speaker, he was in charge of the motorcades. Just before Kennedy arrived Dick was doing a dry run with the Vienna chief of police. He noticed that the chief didn't have a radio in his official car. When he asked the chief how he would communicate with his policemen, "I don't have a radio in my car because it would only make them nervous."

Things were much simpler then. Could you imagine an FSO-7 being the control officer for the Secretary of State now? Dean Rusk had a security detail and a handful of staff with him on the plane. Jack Kennedy was assassinated while we were in Vienna and there was a tremendous outpouring of grief and sympathy.

Q: Could you give an impression of that. I happen to have been on leave from Belgrade in Graz, and somebody told me. "Are you an American?" he said, and he said, "Your president has been shot." I couldn't tell at first whether somebody had shot at him or- (end of tape)

Today is the 5th of October, 1998. This is an interview with William Bodde, Jr.

BODDE: Right.

Library of Congress

Q: But what happened in Vienna?

BODDE: My wife was pregnant at the time with our third child and the baby was born the day that Kennedy was killed, November 22, 1963. I visited her in the hospital shortly after the baby was born and went out to dinner with some people from the embassy. We were eating when somebody from the embassy came in and said the President has been shot. We went right home and I went over to my colleague Jack Sulser who lived close by. His wife answered the door, and she was weeping. The President was dead by then. One of my duties as staff aide was to serve as the embassy protocol officer. I went into the embassy early the next morning and from that time on we were so busy that I didn't see my wife or the baby for ten days. All hell was breaking loose and there were arrangements to be made.

Ingrid was in an Austrian hospital and that evening, a nurse took her radio away. Ingrid didn't think much of it as she thought there might be a rule that you can't have a radio in the room at night. In the morning, the chief doctor and his senior staff called on her to express their condolences. She hadn't heard what happened and at first she thought our baby had died. I had been a volunteer in the Kennedy campaign, and I had come down to Washington as part of the New Frontier so we felt especially sad about his death.

Austrians tend to be emotional, and the outpouring of sympathy was tremendous. Thousands of people came to the embassy to sign the condolence book. In addition to protocol instructions, all embassy officers were instructed by Washington to meet with their contacts to reassure them. The message was that there would be an orderly transfer of power in Washington and there would not be any drastic changes in official policy. A year or two later, when Khrushchev was forced out of power, Soviet diplomats took a similar line.

One of my most vivid memories of that time was the memorial mass for Kennedy held in St. Stephen's Cathedral. As protocol officer I was very involved. Austrian Cardinal

Library of Congress

Koenig officiated at the mass. The huge church was packed. I sat next to the Nobel Prize author John Steinbeck. He wept throughout the ceremony. Q: What about the quote Soviet menace unquote? What was the feeling about it at that time?

BODDE: Things were very tense in Vienna when we arrived because it was during the Cuban missile crisis. We were on the brink of war with the Soviet Union. When the complete story was made public many years later it was clear that the U.S. was even closer to war than we had imagined at the time. The Austrians, by and large, were anti-Soviet. They accepted neutrality as the price for getting the Soviet occupation troops out of Austria. Austrians had vivid memories of life in Vienna before the State Treaty. They remembered well the Soviet terror. It was not uncommon for the Soviets or their henchmen to blackmail politicians, intimidate workers, and kidnap critics. They were taken behind the "Iron Curtain" never to be seen again.

Q: You must have gone there in '62, then.

BODDE: Yes, we arrived there in '62 in November, at the height of the crisis. The Cold War and the Soviet menace were very real. In fact, my Foreign Service career (1962 to 1994) spanned the Cold War. It started with the Cuban Missile Crisis and ended not long after Germany was reunited. I think the Cold War defined world politics in those days.

Q: What about contact with the Russians, Soviets in those days?

BODDE: I had one Soviet contact whom I met frequently. He was the Soviet Embassy film attaché but I am quite sure that was just a cover and he really was a KGB officer. He held showings of the great Russian film classics such as *The Battleship Potemkin* and other Eisenstein masterworks. I wrote memoranda of conversations whenever I saw him. One time the embassy played the Soviet Embassy in volleyball. Our regular team, which was pretty good, included lots of marines. However, when we played the Soviets we had to substitute intelligence officers for the marines and we lost. There was lots of East-West political intrigue in Vienna. Consequently there were many contacts between embassy

Library of Congress

officers and the Soviets. Of course there were lots of things going on that I knew nothing about.

The political counselor I worked for was a very difficult boss. He resented my staff aide relationship with the ambassador. I spent quite a bit of time with Riddleberger but he wasn't the kind of ambassador who needed someone to service him all the time. The night Khrushchev was forced out I had dinner with my Soviet friend. The dinner had been arranged some weeks earlier and we were surprised that he was going ahead with it. I am convinced that they wanted him to have contact with the Americans in order to carry a message of calm and stability. As soon as I got home I wrote it up because I thought Washington would be interested in what sort of line the Soviets were putting out around the world. In the morning I showed it to the political counselor, and he said, "Ah, that's nothing, new. Don't bother to send it in." So I called upstairs to my friends in the Central Intelligence Agency and one of them came right down to my office. He looked at it and asked if it was ok for them to send through their channels. I said sure and they put it on the wires right away. Of course it was interesting. I didn't find out any secrets, or any special insights into Soviet policy, but it did show how the Soviets were trying to spin the story. Of course, we didn't use the word "spin" in those days. My boss was unhappy that a junior officer would be one of the first people to have contact with the Soviets after the fall of Khrushchev.

Q: It had been a four-power administration. Were particularly close ties with the French and the British there, or had that pretty well disappeared?

BODDE: That sort of close cooperation had disappeared in Vienna by the time I got there. Years later when I was a liaison officer to the Berlin Government, I had a British counterpart and a French counterpart and we worked very closely together. I'm trying to think if I knew anybody at the British or French Embassies in Vienna. I must have but I don't remember any of them. I did have close friends at the Canadian Embassy. My career has been a little unique as a political officer in that I generally covered internal politics in

Library of Congress

the countries I served in. As a result I spent little time with other diplomats or dealing with the foreign ministry. I spent much more time with Austrian or German politicians than I did with government officials.

Q: Well, in Austria, were you doing internal politics when you were wearing the political officer hat?

BODDE: Yes, together with the staff aide hat. I knew some Austrian diplomats but I didn't go to the foreign ministry very often. As I mentioned earlier I became a close friend with the chancellor's special assistant, Michael Graff, who decades later ran Kurt Waldheim's successful presidential campaign. In the 1980s the U.S. banned President Waldheim from entering the United States because he had lied about his activities in World War II. As deputy assistant secretary in the European Bureau I was very involved in the so-called "Waldheim Affair." During a trip to Austria I went to see my old friend Michel and he told me that the U.S. had turned his greatest achievement to crap. He was very bitter because we turned Waldheim into an international pariah. He spent his term as president unwelcome in all but a few capitals. My friend had a point, you know. Waldheim was not a likable guy and he played fast and loose with the truth, but he was not a war criminal. He was a German Army officer who served in the Balkans where many atrocities were committed. However, I have seen no evidence that Waldheim was directly responsible for any atrocities. The ban on Waldheim had to do more with domestic U.S. politics than it did with human rights. The Nazi hunters in the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, The World Jewish Congress, and other organizations conducted an aggressive campaign to ban Waldheim and the Reagan Administration gave in to the pressure. The point was that it is easy to kick Austria around without fear of retaliation. With some justification, Austrians said to me during that time that we would not have banned the president of Germany, some of whom had been much more dedicated Nazis than Waldheim. They were right; Germany was simply too big and powerful and too vital to U.S. interests. The European Union (EU) is picking on Austria at the present time because the party identified with a right-wing demagogue is part of the coalition government in

Library of Congress

power. Some of the EU governments that are on their moral high horse have had fascists and communists in their own governments.

Austria was my basic training as a political officer. I had a wide range of contacts ranging across the political spectrum and I learned to do political reporting. Riddleberger taught me to focus on those political developments that might affect U.S. national interests. The key was not to get caught up in the political minutiae no matter how interesting it seemed. I wish that some of our colleagues had learned the same lesson. There were times when the Department got more reporting about the various factions in the Shanghai Communist Party than it did about the economic situation in China. At our farewell party there were people from across the political spectrum, Viennese cultural life, and the media. Some were sworn political enemies going back to the Austrian civil war in the early 1930s. Others had been in Nazi concentration camps together. One elderly friend, a former Austrian minister of war, served as the commander of the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War (his aide-de-camp was Clement Attlee). It was quite a gathering. An Austrian said to me as he was leaving, "You know, Bill, nobody but you could have gotten these people together in the same room."

Austria had a coalition government at the national level since the State Treaty in 1955. If a government minister was a member of the Conservative Party, the deputy minister had to be from the Social Democratic Party and vice versa. Periodically relations between the parties would become tense. One wit said that relations were so bad in the government that the political officer in the American embassy who covered the socialists wasn't talking to the political officer who covered the conservatives." In reality I covered both of them. Vienna was a fascinating and lovely post. It was a great way to start off a career.

Q: Did you get involved at all in the secret war of the... It and Switzerland were the big centers. Espionage people would come back and forth. Did you get involved in any of this?

Library of Congress

BODDE: I was, but accidentally. One of the things the staff aide did was to screen the unofficial mail addressed to the ambassador. Much of it was from nuts but anything that looked like it might have an intelligence angle I would pass on to the Agency. Every few weeks we used to get a handwritten letter that would say something like "The message is under the third rock at kilometer 14 on the road between Prague and Vienna." I always thought it was from a nut but I later found out that it was a real intelligence-drop. Another time a man came into the embassy who just returned from a tour of the Soviet Union; the Soviets had arrested an American from the tour and the man wanted to report it. I immediately put the man in touch with one of our Agency people. When the political counselor learned about it he was angry. Vienna was a neutral meeting ground for East and West so in one way or another everyone in the embassy was involved. The Soviets were trying to recruit our people and we were trying to recruit their people.

Q: Well, you left in '66, is that right?

BODDE: Yes, I think so. Yes.

Q: Where did you go?

BODDE: Well, I came back to the Department for a low point in my career. I came back and worked in so-called public diplomacy. I don't know if my office was officially part of the Public Affairs Bureau at that point. I worked for a political appointee named Katie Louchheim, who was active in the Democratic Party and a friend of the First Lady.

Q: Oh, yes.

BODDE: I was in charge of the Home Leave Travel Program. This program provided an Air Stream trailer and a car for FSOs on home leave to travel around the United States. The idea was to give FSOs a chance to see more of the country they represented abroad and to promote the Foreign Service to the public. In return for giving talks or interviews, the days the FSO did so did not count as leave. It was my job to select the applicants, help

Library of Congress

line up talks at local Rotary Clubs etc., interviews with local media, and schedule the trips. It was actually a good program but not what I joined the Foreign Service to do. Another down side of the job was that some of our colleagues were slob or accident-prone. I would tell them beforehand that there is no GSO (General Services Officer) in real life so if you get a flat tire you will have to fix it yourself or pay someone to fix it! Most officers who participated enjoyed it and did a good job of promoting the service and foreign policy. There's nothing that promotes the Foreign Service better with the American public than having a local boy tell them about it.

After a year on the job, I went to see the personnel people, and I said, okay, I did a solid job and kept this influential political appointee happy. Now I'm ready for something else. When they asked what I would like, I suggested university training and they sent me to Johns Hopkins' School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) for a year.

Q: So you were there from about when?

BODDE: That would have been '66-67. It was great, especially compared to my undergraduate time when I had to work full time to support my family and go to school.

Q: And somebody paying you at the same time.

BODDE: And you got paid but you had to work like hell to keep up with the bright graduate students. It was intellectually stimulating, and actually very useful in my career.

Q: What sort of things were you concentrating on?

BODDE: I concentrated on economics and strategic studies. I was actually sent there for Atlantic affairs training and to become an Atlanticist. In those days we were training people about the European Community, now the European Union. It was the heyday of the Atlanticists in the Department. I am trying to think of some them.

Library of Congress

Q: George Ball was one.

BODDE: Yes, Ball was the Godfather. Robert Schaetzel, John Tuthill, Joe Greenwald, and George Vest were all Atlanticists and served as ambassadors to the European Community.

Q: Lincoln Gordon.

BODDE: Yes I think Gordon was also in the club. Anyhow, I took some very good economics courses, which were very useful later in my career. Also, strategic studies which covered game theory and escalation ladders, etc. were also useful later. Yes, it was a great year.

Q: What did you say, at least with the people you were dealing with at SAIS; what was the thrust of where they were coming from. I mean, were they -

BODDE: I'm a great fan of SAIS because what it has even more than, say, Fletcher or the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, is that most of the teachers have worked at senior levels in the government. At SAIS they teach theory tempered by reality. I studied with scholars such as Isaiah Frank and Bob Osgood. The healthy dose of realism made it much more valuable. At the same time it was intellectually demanding. I studied Soviet military strategy with Ray Garthoff, who was one of the world's leading authorities on the Soviet military. He was later ambassador in Bulgaria and a senior advisor to the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) talks. I did arms control theory with Osgood. That was helpful in Sweden where they take arms control seriously. They even have a cabinet minister for arms control and disarmament.

Q: I was wondering, with the arms control theory that you were getting at the time, were you also picking up the war theory, because wasn't this the heyday of, well, if we do this

Library of Congress

and send a signal, we'll knock off 20 million of their people, they will knock off 20 million - I mean this sort of thing was horrific that these guys were sitting around playing at -

BODDE: We had Herman Kahn and his “doomsday machine” and “assured mutual destruction,” oh yes. My wife used to type my papers and would get depressed just typing them. She'd been through the war in Germany, and knew the horrors of war first hand. In the 1950s Kissinger wrote a book recommending the use of tactical nuclear weapons. He later distanced himself from that idea. We tried Schelling's escalation ladder in Vietnam and it did not deter the North Vietnamese at all. They were much tougher and their resolve was greater than we gave them credit for. But even years later, when I served as consul general in Frankfurt and after that when I was deputy assistant secretary in EUR, my knowledge of arms control and strategy was helpful. That was particularly true during the great debate over deploying intermediate range ballistic missiles in Germany. The economic training was invaluable when I became the first executive director of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Singapore. For the last four years I have been a visiting professor at the masters of business administration (MBA) program at the University of Hawaii.

Q: Well, '67-68 was the time of the escalation of the Vietnam War and the Tet Offensive was in January of '68. How was Vietnam handled there, and also how were you getting by being in Washington at the time?

BODDE: Before we went off for our university training, we had a three-week preparatory course at FSI. Near the end they finally brought somebody in to talk about Vietnam. We needed it because you were bound to face many hostile questions when the students found out you were from the State Department. SAIS was not a hotbed of radicalism or anti-Vietnam protests. The general attitude was that the U.S. could not just pull out. The professors basically supported what the U.S. was doing in Vietnam. When I got to Sweden I became even a stronger supporter. I used to say the Swedes, with their unceasing anti-American criticism, could turn a liberal Democrat into an arch-conservative.

Library of Congress

Q: I'd like to get the beginning. You were in Sweden from that would be '67 -

BODDE: '67 to '70

Q: '67 to '70, and so I take it the Vietnam War would once and a while come up as a subject.

BODDE: Yes, yes. We had a two-person political section. I worked for Jerry Holloway - Jerome Knight Holloway—an old Asia hand and one of the most brilliant officers in the Service. After a year he was replaced by Buck Borg, who was later executive secretary of the Department.

Vietnam was a major issue for us and for the Swedes. We tried to use Sweden as an intermediary with North Vietnam. It didn't work because the Swedes misled us. Anyhow, it was pretty heady stuff for a relatively junior officer to be involved in secret talks

Q: Sort of to set the stage, what was the political situation in Sweden at the time?

BODDE: Well, the Social Democrats had just won a landslide election with the old Social Democrat, Tage Erlander at the helm. Later his prot#g#, Olaf Palme, became Prime Minister. It was a center-left government but on international affairs it moved to the left and was one of the first democratic countries to recognize Hanoi. There was a group in the foreign ministry called the “Red Guard” by their critics. They set out to move Sweden closer to North Vietnam and, in doing so, away from us. The aide to the foreign minister, Jean Christoph Oberg, whom I knew well, was the unofficial leader of the Red Guard. Later he was named Sweden's first ambassador to North Vietnam. The Government of Sweden under Palme moved from sympathizers to unconditional supporters of North Vietnam.

There was a disconnect between the political elite and the common Swedes. The latter were not hostile to the U.S. and many had relatives who had emigrated to America. While

Library of Congress

I was there North Vietnam opened up an embassy in Stockholm. The Department would send out experts to boost the embassy efforts to convince the Swedes of the merits of U.S. policy. Some of them were excellent, such as the long-time student of Vietnam, Douglas Pike, or Barry Zorthian, who had been PAO (Public Affairs Officer) in Saigon. Others were true believers who didn't have much to offer except their zeal. I remember one time when a visitor from Washington gave us an emotional pep talk on winning the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese. His name was Daniel Ellsberg and later he had a change of heart and leaked the "Pentagon Papers" to The New York Times.

President Johnson appointed Judge William W. Heath as ambassador to Sweden. Heath was a Texas crony of Johnson's who had been secretary of state of Texas and the president of the University of Texas. I always felt that Heath was what Lyndon Johnson would have been like if he had never left Texas. Well, Heath thought he was going to a friendly sort of place because they had lots of Swedes in Texas. When he got to Stockholm he found himself isolated and his friend, the President constantly criticized. To make matters worse, he had a speech impediment from a stroke, and so he didn't make very many public appearances.

Shortly after I arrived, the embassy was about to send the head of the Social Democrats' youth movement to the U.S. on an USIA (United States Information Agency) International Visitor's grant. Just before he was to leave there was a big anti-Vietnam demonstration in Stockholm. The next day on the front page of the Swedish newspapers there was a picture of him leading the demonstration together with four American deserters from the U.S. aircraft carrier, Intrepid.

The Ambassador called me in. Jerry was on leave and I had been there about two weeks. The Ambassador said, "Bill, I see you have sent me a memo asking me to approve sending this fellow to the United States. We're paying for him to go to the United States, and there he is demonstrating against us with those American traitors." He went on to say, "Bill, where I come from, we don't reward rattlesnakes." I'm standing there thinking

Library of Congress

to myself - I have only been here two weeks, and already the Ambassador thinks I'm on the side of the rattlesnakes. So I swallowed hard and said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, I was born in Brooklyn. As far as I know we don't have any rattlesnakes in Brooklyn. But if we had them, we wouldn't reward them." I told him that, "We can send the handful of people in Sweden who support U.S. policy, and we can keep sending them over and over if that's what you want. What we're trying to do is to send opinion leaders, some of who have been vocal critics of U.S. policy in the past, and try to get them to temper their views. You have to make up your mind whether you want us to preach to the choir or whether you want us to preach to the sinners in the hope we might even convert a few." He said, "All right," and he approved the grant.

Over time, I gained his confidence to the degree that I was the only embassy officer that he authorized to give public speeches. I did a hundred of them in three years. From the very beginning I faced demonstrations. I have a scrapbook at home that's unbelievable. I have a photo of a kid holding a big placard "MR. BODDE GO HOME" and another flyer that reads "BODDE MURDERER." It was good training. If you can get up before a thousand people that are screaming obscenities at you, you will not be daunted by any audience.

Q: How would you treat this? I mean, you'd try to win over the audience, but how would you phrase your speeches?

BODDE: It wasn't easy given the Swedish mindset. One time I was up in a village above the Arctic Circle giving a talk before 30 people or so. It was an open meeting and anyone could attend. When I got to the lectern there was a note on it. It said, "Go home, white pig." White pig? I look around the room at 30 blond, blue-eyed people, and I thought, "What are we talking about here? I have more black friends at home than they will ever see in their lifetime - Go home, white pig - I mean, have you people looked in a mirror?" I reminded them that the slurs I hear Swedes make about Gypsies or Finns are the same kind of racist slurs I used to hear about African Americans when I was growing up.

Library of Congress

I would try not to give the straight party line. I would admit that the U.S., like all countries, makes mistakes but, that said, the U.S. still represents the world's best hope. At a modern art exhibit in Stockholm one of the artists had painted a map of the world, or rather a map of the Northern Hemisphere without the United States. The border of Canada and Mexico touched. And I would use that as an example. I would say, "Now, some of you in this room think that things would be ideal if you could just get rid of the United States. But even if there were no United States do you think world poverty would disappear, disease would disappear, injustice would disappear?" I would then ask them where Europe would be if the United States had remained neutral in World War II. I would make the argument that Sweden can be neutral but the world can not afford a neutral U.S. Once a kid asked me if I thought the U.S. could be the policeman of the world. I said, "No, no country is wise enough or powerful enough for that role. The U.S. can no more be the policeman of the world than Sweden can be the conscience of the world!"

After we invaded Cambodia I no longer felt that I should go out and publicly support U.S. policy in Vietnam. Fortunately, for me, it was time to go home anyhow. Having your country attacked over and over about everything makes you very defensive. Back in the Department I joined a small group of young officers who eventually met with Secretary Rogers to protest that our Vietnam policy was alienating our allies. We told him that it was not just the kids demonstrating in the streets but many professionals in the Department that opposed our present policy. We believed that the Nixon/Kissinger Vietnam policy was doing serious damage to relations with our allies in Europe and elsewhere. It was too high a price to pay, we told him.

I have changed my mind since then. I look back and I think we tried to do the right thing in Vietnam. We may not have fully understood that it was a civil war and that we were backing a losing horse. But, at the same time, anybody who believed that the North Vietnamese were the good guys was dead wrong. Since the war ended I've been to Hanoi, I've been to Saigon, and I've lectured to visiting professors from Hanoi, so I have some

Library of Congress

sense of the area. I have great admiration for the Vietnamese, but when people say the war was a terrible mistake I reply, "If you look at Asia today, who won the war? What's happening in Asia today demonstrates that American values won the war." It was at a great cost in blood and treasure but I believe it was worth it.

Q: Well, what was your analysis or the embassy analysis, when you could get away from just saying "these bloody Swedes," why were they taking - I mean it seemed like almost a good way to take out their frustrations? I mean we were far away and also we wouldn't kick back.

BODDE: It was easy to lose your patience with the Swedes. We used to call Sweden "the mother-in-law of the world." They were always lecturing everybody on how to behave. They were arrogant and always ready to solve other people's problems, such as the relations between the races in our country. I remember Ralph Abernathy came to Stockholm.

Q: He was a leader of the black movement.

BODDE: He was one of Martin Luther King's key lieutenants and took over the movement when King was shot. The Swedes told Abernathy that his group was too moderate and that they supported the Black Panthers, a radical black group. He told them, "I have more people in my congregation" - he was a Protestant minister - "than there are Black Panthers in America." You know, I mean, get a life, get real. Part of it was na#vet#, because Sweden was far removed from many of the problems. We used to call it "the inverse rule." That is, the farther away the problem the stronger the Swedes felt about it and the more confident they were that they had the solution. I think Sweden has paid a huge price for their self-imposed isolation since the Thirty Years' War. Neutrality cost them a lot. Of course, now they're becoming more engaged and have joined the European Union.

Library of Congress

Q: I would think that you would find yourself sort of driven into the corner of sticking out the fact that they profited by World War II, and everybody else... I mean, where were you in that?

BODDE: Oh, yes. As the fortunes of the Nazis diminished in World War II, the Swedes became more and more friendly to the allies. Sure, we'd remind them, of course, but that only gets you so far. I would say the average Swede was not anti-American. It was the intellectual elites that were our most vocal critics. When I came back to the Department in 1970, I became Sweden and Finland desk officer, so I spent about five years of my career working on Sweden. But I have never been back. Sweden is a country that's - in its own way - very intolerant. I remember the Swedish cultural attach# at the embassy once told me ruefully, "Remember Sweden is a small country and only has room for one opinion at a time." It is a country of iron-willed political correctness; you either were politically correct, or you were an outcast.

Q: Well, what about the Soviet Union? I mean, you know, after all, this was Communism, East versus West, in a way, and was there any ambivalence, or did they know where they were on that?

BODDE: The Soviets used to complain to the Swedes, "You say you are neutral, but all your missiles are pointed at us." The Swedes knew that the major threat to their security was the Soviet Union. At the same time they wrapped themselves in their neutrality and were careful not to provoke the Soviets. The Soviets knew that in their hearts the Swedes were not pro-Soviet or pro-Communist. Even Olaf Palme, when he was a student, had married a Czechoslovakian woman to get her out from behind the Iron Curtain.

Q: In a way, was this one of those operations in Sweden at that time of, you know, keeping the flag flying? I mean, was Sweden considered sort of a write-off?

Library of Congress

BODDE: It was a write-off as far as Vietnam policy was concerned but there were other areas of cooperation. We had a large military presence in the embassy. We had an air force attach# and assistant attach#. We had a senior army attach# and an assistant attach#. The navy had a senior attach# and two assistant attaches. One of the assistant navy attach#s before I got there was Bobby Inman. His successor was a Commander Bob Schmidt, who later became an admiral and the deputy head of the National Security Agency. The Pentagon took Sweden seriously and assigned top-flight officers to the embassy. The Swedish fighter plane, the Viggen has a lot of American-built components. The American science community also took Sweden seriously. Sweden grants the Nobel prizes in science, medicine and economics.

Sometimes Washington took Sweden too seriously. After all, it is a small country and not major player in world politics. When they protested or postured at the UN or elsewhere the U.S. should have ignored them. But we would overreact. A distinguished African American educator, Jerome Holland, replaced Heath as Ambassador. But relations continued to deteriorate and when Ambassador Holland left, the U.S. refused to replace him and after a time we even pulled out the charg#. The Department did not permit contact with the Swedish Embassy above the desk officer level. That was wonderful for me as desk officer because I got to go to a lot of dinners and meet all sorts of important people, mostly from the liberal establishment. Ironically, their ambassador at the time was very pro-American. They had very good professionals at the Swedish Embassy.

Q: Was this difficult for your wife and for you just to live there?

BODDE: No, for two reasons. First of all, my wife can cope with any situation. For example, she learned that the Swedish trade unions had special language classes for immigrants and she signed up. Everybody else in the class was an immigrant or a refugee and they were all serious about learning Swedish. As a result, she was soon fluent in the language. One week a Swedish diplomat's wife was teaching the course. She was so impressed that an American diplomat's wife would take such a course that she convinced

Library of Congress

the foreign ministry to sponsor a course for diplomats' spouses. Secondly, we had a lot of friends in Sweden. Most of our friends were either other diplomats, Swedes married to foreigners, or Swedes who had lived abroad. Because of the vocal anti-American atmosphere, there was a kind of circle-the-wagons mentality among the Americans and our allies. As a result we partied frantically. It was one of the most social posts we have ever been to.

Q: What about the deserters? What was our attitude towards them?

BODDE: Another positive factor was that the work was so interesting. One of my most fascinating jobs was to deal with the deserter problem.

Q: American deserters.

BODDE: Yes, we had a peak of 140 at one point but we usually averaged 120 at any given time. When the first deserters arrived, we went to the Swedes and told them that they shouldn't take these people. They told us that they must take them on human rights grounds. I think they thought they were going to get a bunch of idealists who opposed the war. They expected Jane Fonda or her male equivalent. Well, there were a few idealists but most of the deserters were misfits deserting from the U.S. forces in Germany. Most of them should have never been taken into the service in the first place. Sweden ended up a dumping ground for servicemen with serious personal problems. Swedish society is highly educated and very competitive and in those days it was still very homogeneous. If you didn't speak Swedish fluently and have a trade or a profession, you would end up working at low paying, dead end jobs. Many deserters found that was not much fun, so they became drug dealers or petty criminals and ran afoul of Swedish law. We had cases of child abuse, suicides, and criminal charges. I even had a deserter, high on drugs, pull a knife on me.

The embassy would lend them money for air fare if they wanted to go home and turn themselves in and many did. The Swedes were unhappy with the troublemakers and came

Library of Congress

to the embassy to tell us we should take back the ones that got in trouble or the ones that were on welfare. Our response was sorry, "You took them against our advice and now they are your problem." Once we had a deserter come to the embassy who had escaped from a mental institution and wanted to turn himself in. I spent hours convincing him that I could do nothing for him unless he went back to the institution. He finally agreed and in the middle of the night we drove the 30 miles back to the mental hospital in a police car. The next morning I went to see a senior foreign ministry official to get assurances that there would be no leaks to the media that the embassy was forcing him to go back against his will. In this case they were happy to be rid of him and he went home and turned himself in.

Q: Well, we'll pick up the Desk officer time. And I think that's about it, and also our reading on Palme at the time. And a little more about how we saw Sweden's role in the Third World, particularly Africa, okay?

BODDE: Sure.

Q: Today is October 16, 1998. Bill, you were still desk officer for Sweden at this point.

BODDE: Yes, I was desk officer. After I came back from Sweden, I was desk officer from 1970-72. You mentioned Olaf Palme at the end of our last session. When I first met Palme he was the education minister. He wasn't prime minister yet. Tage Erlander, the grand old man of Swedish socialism was prime minister, and had just won a landslide election. Palme took over as leader when Erlander stepped down and later was elected prime minister his own right.

I've always considered Palme a fraud, frankly. He was a type of romantic leftist, that were very common in Sweden. In some ways he knew the United States well because he had studied here, but in other ways he had such strange views of the United States you wondered what country he had lived in.

Library of Congress

Anyhow, as I mentioned earlier, we tried to use the Swedes as an intermediary. But the problem in using Sweden, and that was typical of Palme, too: you can't be the honest broker if you're not completely honest with both sides. They should have told us exactly what the North Vietnamese said and they should have told the North Vietnamese exactly what we said. They didn't do that and we were caught by surprise by North Vietnam actions when we should not have been. Looking back, I am not sure either the U.S. or North Vietnam were sincerely interested in peace. Certainly North Vietnam would accept no outcome except total victory. I had a low opinion of Palme, but I must say he was very smooth. While I was desk officer, Nixon gave a dinner for the heads of state and heads of government who were in New York for the 25th anniversary of the United Nations. Because it was a stag dinner each dignitary was given a Foreign Service Officer escort. We were not at the dinner itself. We ate in the White House mess while the leaders ate upstairs. But we escorted them into the White House, joined them after dinner for the entertainment and after-dinner drinks and we escorted them out. It was fantastic. It was like wandering into Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum. At one point, I stepped back and inadvertently stepped on Golda Meir's toe. You looked around and there was Haile Selassie or Edward Heath or whoever.

Well, Palme was in very bad odor in the Nixon White House at the time but he came anyhow. The protocol arrangements must have been a nightmare. There was no time for conversation between Palme and the President in the receiving line but on the way out there would be a few minutes of small talk with the President. I wondered what Palme was going to say to the American President being such a vocal and public critic of Nixon's policies. It could have been an awkward moment. But I underestimated Palme's diplomatic skills. When he got up to the President in the farewell line, Palme thanked the President and said, "The opera singers, Evelyn Lear and John McCracken, who preformed this evening were wonderful. I noticed in the program that McCracken is from Gary, Indiana and if I remember right from my student days in America the great middleweight boxer Tony Zale was from Gary." Well, Nixon was a sports buff and his eyes lit up, and he said,

Library of Congress

enthusiastically "Oh, yes, Zale was one of the greatest middleweights ever, you know", and - boom - we were out of there. Palme knew exactly what button to push.

Because of the ban on high-level contacts, Ingrid and I were invited to many wonderful black-tie dinners at the ambassador's residence. The Swedes wisely cultivated the liberal establishment, including the Kennedys. The Swedes had some very good young officers at the embassy. I used to have a lunch with younger embassy officers once a month. We used to go over to Georgetown to an Irish tavern. The idea was that this meeting was off the record and we could speak frankly and nobody was going to go back and report it. Of course, if it were really important I would have reported it and so would they. It was an opportunity to talk about the problems they were having with the State Department or whatever. Where possible I would help them and tell them who were the most helpful people to talk to at the Department. I would call in advance and ask colleagues to receive them. My closest friend at the embassy was the political counselor, whose name was Jan Eliasson. He later served as their ambassador to the UN and brokered the Iran-Iraq cease-fire. He is supposed to be coming to Washington to be ambassador. Despite differences between us on Vietnam, we had a good time together, but you were asking about their attitudes toward aid.

They were good in the sense that they gave close to the goal of one percent of GNP for foreign aid. However, most Swedes was more interested in demonstrating in downtown Stockholm than joining the Swedish peace corps and going to live in the Third World. They had a lot of trouble recruiting people. They loved the Third World as long as the Third World stayed down there and they stayed up where they were. Despite their claims Sweden was not immune to racism in the treatment of minorities. That was before the large influx of refugees so in my time there weren't very many minorities, but the ones who were there were often treated poorly. Blacks that I knew, some married to Swedes and very assimilated, told me of the slights they endured. An American black woman who was married to a Swedish diplomat told me she would go into a store and somehow she would

Library of Congress

always be last to be waited on. Even the black deserters ran into problems. They thought they were coming to utopia where there was no racial discrimination. Nonsense.

Q: Was there the feeling, because of the socialist...

BODDE: You're asking whether there were spies and communist sympathizers in Sweden? When I arrived, there was lots of publicity about the Swedish Air Force officer, Westerlund, who had been convicted as a spy for the Soviets. Some of our military people in the embassy knew him. The Left was big in Sweden but it was, by and large, not pro-Soviet. It was more like the romantic New Left in the U.S. They wore North Vietnam buttons or carried Mao's little red book but it was mostly posturing. In general, the Swedish political spectrum was to the left of ours. Even the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party were to the left of their counterparts in the U.S.

Even the Conservatives who were somewhat more in sympathy with us were critical of some U.S. policies or actions. I usually would be invited by the Conservative Party Youth to give talks. But their meetings were open to the public and would often end up in anti-American demonstrations. Whenever I arrived on a campus I would check out the student union or other meeting places to see if there were announcements of my talk, and even more important, if there were calls for a demonstration at my talk. I remember going to Lund University which is in southern Sweden and was known as a very radical university. When I got there I asked my host, "Do you expect any trouble?" "No, no, he said." I said, "Well, let's go over to the student union and have a cup of coffee." The student union was plastered with posters about the visit of the "fascist imperialist Bodde and calling on the students to demonstrate." No trouble, right? We won't have any trouble. Of course we had trouble. But there's sort of a nice story involved with that trip. I spent a week giving talks throughout southern Sweden, and a young Conservative student drove me around. He was in his mid-twenties and really loved politics. As a result he was taking forever to get his university degree. He was even thinking about quitting school and going to work full time at national party headquarters in Stockholm. I said, "Let me give you some advice.

Library of Congress

Get your degree. What you are doing now is lots of fun and very interesting, but some day there may be a change in party leadership and you could be out on your ear. If you want to be independent, get an education so you have something to fall back on besides politics.” End of story. Well, it was not the end of the story. Many years later, I was sitting in my office in the State Department. The receptionist called from the C Street lobby and said that there was a gentleman from Sweden in the lobby who would like to see you. I went down and there was my young friend from that trip almost 20 years earlier. He said, “You probably don't remember me. I took you around southern Sweden to give talks on U.S. foreign policy back in the 1960s.” I told him that I remembered the trip but I was not sure I would have recognized him. He said, “I just came to thank you. I took your advice and applied myself to getting my degree. I'm now the youngest member of Parliament,” he said, “but I know I can walk out any time, because I have something to fall back on. Thanks again.” It makes you feel good.

Q: Sure it does.

BODDE: In fact, Anders Bjork, who's been the senior UN official in Bosnia, was the youngest member of Parliament when we sent him on an International Visitor's grant to the States.

Q: One last question on Sweden. At that time, the Swedes had a very comprehensive social policy, which was obviously very costly, high taxes and all. Were we looking at this and seeing this is the wave of the future, or they've got problems coming down the way? I mean, were we looking at the cost of this and how it figured in the Swedish context?

BODDE: Some American senators and congressmen studied the Swedish system to see if it might be applied in the U.S. I don't think they found very much. There were also a few American journalists writing about Sweden's “Middle Way” which they saw as a compromise between rampant communism and brutal capitalism. Marquis Childs, the liberal columnist, wrote a book called *The Middle Way*. Interestingly enough, the Swedish

Library of Congress

social welfare system wasn't as extensive as the Germans', and the Germans' system was much older. The problem with both systems is that they are too expensive. Back in those days people were not looking at the high costs. Cost aside, it was apparent that a system that worked for a small, homogeneous county might not work for a huge country with a diverse population. No country can afford it now. The taxes got so bad that some famous Swedes such as movie director Ingmar Bergman and Astrid Lindgren, who wrote Pippi Longstocking, had to leave Sweden. They were paying over 100 percent marginal tax rate. I mean it was just crazy.

BODDE: I left the Swedish desk in '72.

Q: *And where?*

BODDE: I became personnel officer for Europe in the European Bureau. Joan Clark was the executive director.

Q: *So this is what? '72 to -*

BODDE: Just for a year, '72 to '73.

Q: *I always like to talk about the personnel system. I would have thought you would have been a very... I mean, EUR is sort of the preeminent thing. Lots of people want to get in. They claim it's sort of a closed system, and other people who've been serving their time in Africa and other places, they'd like to have a chance to go to the fleshpots of Stockholm or something like that. Did you feel you were in a powerful position there?*

BODDE: Oh, sure. I first realized that it was a powerful position when people started sending me Christmas cards who wouldn't have said hello to me in the hallway before. You may not believe it but we really did try to bring fresh blood into EUR from other bureaus. I know I did. However, the way you did personnel assignments then, was when somebody's name was suggested for a position you would find out where they had served

Library of Congress

and called people you knew and trusted and ask if they knew the candidate. One thing struck me then - I'm sure it's true now and it will be true as long as we have a Foreign Service - the corridor reputation is much more accurate than the paper trail. That's why when the promotion list comes out, there's a certain amount of turkeys on it, everybody says, "How could they promote that guy." And there are some people who everybody knows are good and who people are trying to get to come and work for them, and who don't get promoted.

A lot of your Foreign Service career is based upon your specialization. And that is often based on the accident of where your first post is. You go where you're sent. I was in the so-called German club, which was considered closed to outsiders. There were other strong clubs within the Service like the Soviet club, the Japan club or the China club. But the German club was unique in that there was a gatekeeper who had been a Foreign Service officer named Elwood Williams. Elwood had been struck with multiple sclerosis and became a civil servant.

Q: Oh, yes, I remember. Elwood Williams was a very famous person.

BODDE: It definitely was a different Foreign Service. When I was personnel officer, Elwood got worse. I helped recruit a male nurse and the Department paid 50 percent of his salary so Elwood could keep working.

Q: I used to see him being wheeled into the cafeteria.

BODDE: Yes, right. Well, Elwood served as the German office's institutional memory, something that is rare in the Department. I mean he'd been there forever, and if you did your first job in Germany, as a high percentage of the people did, usually as a consular officer...

Q: I did mine in Frankfurt.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Okay, you got on Elwood's list. If you had filed a couple of political or economic reports that were good, you'd come across his screen as a promising German type. After that Elwood kept tabs on you. Then when they were looking for someone to fill a job in Germany at your grade he would propose you. It was a functioning and efficient personnel system no other geographic bureau had. One possible exception was Francis Wilson in the Economic Bureau and she served the same function for economic officers. Elwood probably made some mistakes, but by and large it worked. When I was in the A-100 class, those of us who were going to German-speaking posts called on Elwood, and he would track your career after that. The system is more open now but we've gotten away from area specialization. It became a dirty word with the advent of GLOP - remember the Global Outlook Program? The Department always faces a dilemma of efficiency versus-

Q: *-expertise.*

BODDE: -or justice. Why should some officers have to go from one hellhole to another, while others go from Rome to Paris to London? And yet once you start to build a field of expertise in German or some other European culture and you know the language and you know the people, it doesn't make a lot of sense to send you off to Africa when they can use you in Europe. So there has always been this tension - and when it works right, it's a creative tension - in the personnel system. Joan Clark was probably the most competent personnel officer I ever knew. She had been at it for years, and so I learned a lot working for her as a personnel officer. Basically, our problem was the imbalances in the system. We had a surplus of good political officers and enough good economic officers. Among the consular officers, you had some really good ones, but you had a lot of turkeys. When you got to the administrative officers there was a severe shortage of first-rate officers. The central system is primarily concerned with placing bodies. The bureaus are, by and large, interested in getting the best people, or at least who they think are the best people, to fill the jobs. My impression is that the system works well about 80 percent of the time. Most of the time the system assigns and promotes the right people but some good people get

Library of Congress

screwed. I don't know what you do about that. We keep toying with the system. We keep changing the exam. I don't know if you have anything to do with the junior officers now, but my impression has been they're as good as we were

Q: Yes, I mean, when you -

BODDE: No matter what we do with the exam, no matter what we do to the process.

Q: It still all boils down to looking, over the past 50 years, we've taken in about one percent of those who apply for the exam. Now a good number drop out because they just don't have time or it's too much trouble, a better job, or something like that, but still, when you come down to one percent of those who express initial interest, you get a pretty good crop.

BODDE: I used to tell the Senior Seminar when I was dean, "Don't tell me somebody's smart. I don't know many dumb people in our business. There aren't many dumb people in the State Department or in the Foreign Service." As you say, they take only one percent - you're not going to get many dumb people. But I would tell them, "Smart is easy; wise is difficult; and decent is damn near impossible - so if you know someone who is wise and decent hold on to them because you've got somebody special." We don't have any problems in the Foreign Service with the level of intelligence or academic skills. We sometimes have some problems with motivation. Our problems reflect the problems of our society at any given time. We all have known colleagues and people who were working for us that were obsessed with their careers. They worried more about what their next job was going to be than doing the job they are in. I would try to tell them, "It may sound corny, but do a really good job, and nine times out of ten, that will hold you in better stead than, you know, than spending your time worrying about whether it is a career-enhancing job." Of course there are some career-enhancing jobs, obviously. Officers who spend a lot of time on the seventh floor seem to do very well. But I also know some very successful people who were noticed because they were doing exceptionally well in mundane jobs. Our former ambassador to Turkey, Mark Parris, is a good example. As a junior officer,

Library of Congress

Mark Parris was assigned as consular officer in the Azores. Now if anyone told you this was a career-enhancing job, you'd have to doubt his or her sanity. But Charlie Thomas, who just died recently, was DCM in Lisbon and he made a trip to the Azores. When he came back he told the ambassador "We have got a super-bright kid down there that we should bring up to the embassy," and booMark was transferred to the embassy, and later became a Soviet specialist and has had a remarkable career.

Q: I remember in Belgrade, Eagleburger was a third or fourth officer in the economic section, but he kept meeting these people as control officer, and including people like Nelson Rockefeller came through, and you know, pretty soon he was on everybody's lips.

BODDE: David Anderson was with you too, when Larry was there. He's another very good officer, and they were great buddies.

Q: They all took Serbian together. Well, anyway, this personnel thing, one of the things about being in personnel, usually you can name your own job. I mean that's sort of one of the, not ironies, but you often have some of your best and brightest people in what in normal business would be a pretty humdrum job off somewhere else, but it's because of the - I'm speaking as someone who was in personnel, too - and you can often name your own job, or get a pretty good idea.

BODDE: That's the attraction of it, because, you know, a lot of it is painful. You're always telling people they can't have the jobs they want, or you can't give people good jobs even when you want to. The system can be so stupid, and you have to fight it all the time. I used to tell the junior officers in Frankfurt, "There is nothing I would rather have done with my life than be a Foreign Service Officer. I'm near the end of my career, and that's the way I feel about it. But let me tell you something, you work for a lousy outfit." Don't look for the organization to take care of you, because the system is responding to myriad pressures, such as emphasis on gender or affirmative action or the handicapped, The one thing the personnel system does not have a box for on assignments is expert knowledge. You

Library of Congress

know, that rarely comes into play. The payoff for all the frustration as a personnel officer is that you usually can manipulate your next assignment. I did, but my car pool also had something to do with it.

Q: This is the preeminent personnel placement system, and that's the car pool.

BODDE: We used to say there's secret, top secret, and then there is car pool confidential. There is a Ph.D. in the study of the sociology of State Department car pools. They not only act as an informal subculture to get people assignments, but they also affect the policy because things are said in the car pool that tips people off about things that are going to happen that they would never know otherwise.

I was in a very active, very opinionated car pool. Dave Klein, who was minister in Berlin, came to Washington for consultations. He rode with us for a week and when I was proposed for a job in Berlin Dave Klein knew who I was. Part of it is just connecting a human's face to a candidate's name. People will always take the devil they know rather than the devil you don't know. So if somebody's in your car pool says, "Hey, Stu Kennedy's a good guy, we served together in Mexico." That is a strong endorsement that will often tip the scales. So my car pool did have a role in going to my next job, which was in Berlin, as the senate liaison officer. The senate liaison officer job was special because of the role the four powers played in Berlin. We had an officer assigned to liaise with the Berlin Senat, which is the city council, headed by the governing mayor. Governing mayor of Berlin is a very big political job in Germany. Chancellor Willi Brandt had been governing mayor as had Richard von Weizsaecker, who later became president of the Federal Republic. The liaison job was interesting because you had an office in the Rathaus-Sch#neberg where Kennedy gave his "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech. You also had an office at the political section of the U.S. Mission. You were right in the middle of German politics

Q: You were there from '73-

Library of Congress

BODDE: Only for a year.

Q: From '73 to '74?

BODDE: And the reason for that was my boss. The job was fantastic; I loved the job, and Berlin was an exciting place. We all had wonderful houses and all that kind of thing because it was all paid out of occupation funds. The Germans paid for all the facilities, so everybody lived well. With my particular job came opera tickets, sports tickets and all sorts of things sponsored or subsidized by the Berlin Government. The problem was that I was working for a man who was an extremely difficult and very nervous boss. He was supposed to leave after my first year but then he was moved up to replace Buck Borg - I don't know if you know him-

Q: I know Buck. We were in the Senior Seminar together.

BODDE: Oh, okay. Buck was the number two, the equivalent of the DCM, and I had worked for Buck in Sweden. I liked Buck very much

BODDE: It wasn't that my boss was a bad guy. He was a decent man and smart, but just was not good to work for. Peter Semler was assigned to be political counselor. Peter worked at FSI for a long time. I knew Peter slightly and he was a very nice guy. But, I decided life was too short. If you're not happy at work, you're not happy. So I had to get out of Berlin and fortunately, I lucked out. There was a job opening in the political section in Bonn as the chief of the two-person internal section. It turned out to be one of those wonderful breaks you get in the Service accidentally. It was a super job and much better for my career than if I had stayed in Berlin.

Q: I want to go back though. Let's talk about Berlin.

BODDE: Yes.

Library of Congress

Q: '73-'74, what was the situation in Berlin at that time as you all were seeing it?

BODDE: Well, of course, the Wall defined the city. It was just after the Quadripartite Agreement had been concluded and it was a good agreement. The U.S. had negotiated it with the Russians, the French, and the British. The agreement made life better for the Berliners on both sides of the Wall. It facilitated travel on the autobahn between Berlin and West Germany. A whole bunch of procedural regulations were simplified but it also improved things for the communists. The Russians got to open a consulate in West Berlin. But Berlin was still the Cold War writ large. East Germans were still shot if they tried to escape to the West. We had a Turkish toddler fall into the canal, which separated the two parts of Berlin. The West Berlin fire department couldn't go in and rescue him because the canal was East German territory. So he drowned. We later negotiated an arrangement to avoid such tragedies.

The dividing line went through the middle of Lake Wannsee. When sailing, you'd get to the marker buoys, and the East Germans would be patrolling the other side. We were encouraged to visit East Berlin because we wanted to demonstrate the allied right to be in East Berlin, which we did not consider part of East Germany. There's a whole theology that goes with that. You could hand your ID to the Russians, but not to the East German guards.

I served in Berlin with Felix Bloch who later was charged for spying against the U.S. He probably was recruited when we were in Berlin together. One year when we were all serving together in Berlin, Felix, Dick Barkley and I were not promoted and we were very disappointed. We were all unhappy, but I think that in Felix's case it may have triggered his decision. So Berlin was an exciting place to be during the Cold War.

Q: I just finished this Tuesday an interview concentrated on the Quadripartite Agreement with Jock Dean.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Ah, he's a wonderful man.

Q: And he was saying that at the time it was difficult because where Bonn was looking at it one way, Berlin itself, as you say had this theology about what you do, how you do it, and there was a certain amount of broken crockery on the theological side as far as when they came to an agreement, they were afraid that you open anything, it will open up the whole, which would weaken our position there. And I was wondering, shortly after the agreement had been reached and you were kind of new to that area, what were you getting from the Berlin perspective about the agreement: happy, unhappy, learning to live with it?

BODDE: Well, the West Berliners themselves were happy with the agreement because there were a lot of things that came with it for them. You've got to remember this was in the '70s, so the war had been over for almost thirty years. People had acclimated themselves to life in the divided city as it was and some of the inconveniences of living with the large Allied military presence were beginning to bridle. I remember there always used to be complaints about the army firing range or when the military flights came in low and made too much noise. I remember once in frustration, the British public affairs officer saying something in public that many of us wanted to say at the time. He said, "We didn't hear any complaints during the Berlin Airlift that our flights were making too much noise." There was some pressure to be more accommodating to the East Germans. Berlin at that time was governed by the Social Democrats. Willi Brandt had moved to Bonn and Klaus Sch#tz had taken his place.

Q: Willi Brandt at this time, was he foreign minister, or was he-

BODDE: He was already chancellor. The Social Democrats' Ostpolitik took a more benign view of the East Germans than we did. The main goal of Ostpolitik was reaching some sort of accommodation with the East Germans. The Social Democrats' argument was essentially that we should face the facts. East Germany is a reality, and no amount of theology was going to make it go away. If we treat the East German Government more

Library of Congress

generously we will encourage them to make life better for our fellow Germans on the other side of the Wall.

The long-range goal of Ostpolitik was to change East German behavior to the degree that one day the two Germanies could come together, possibly as a federation. Egon Bahr was one of the principal architects of Ostpolitik. Jock Dean must have talked about him when you interviewed him. Somebody told me that at one point in the negotiations Bahr screamed at Dean for raising objections to some Bahr proposal, "You're standing in the way of history."

Well, now that we have the East German records of what was really said at some of the East German (GDR) - West German (FRG) meetings, we find that the Social Democrats chose never to take a tough line with the East Germans. When I was deputy assistant secretary I participated in a number of meetings with the East Germans, including Erich Honecker. I also led the U.S. side in political talks with the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the official name of East Germany in 1988. I never had a discussion with them that I didn't start off with a statement that made it clear that we thought it was barbaric to kill your own people for trying to leave the country. They would respond with "That's our internal affair, and the U.S. shouldn't interfere in our internal affairs." Then I'd say, "You can call it an internal affair if you wish, but if you want to be a member of the community of civilized nations, you can not murder your people who want to leave. It's that simple." Then we would move on to the business at hand.

There's a very good book about that period by Timothy Gatten Ash: *In Europe's Name*. It is about West Germany's relations with the GDR. Ash had access to the East German records when he wrote the book. From the record it is clear that the Social Democrats did not reprimand the East Germans for the atrocities they were committing against their own people. They might do so in a election speech in West Germany but not in the private meetings with the East Germans. I defended Ostpolitik back then and I certainly thought the Quadripartite Agreement was a good thing.

Library of Congress

As time goes on I have become convinced that it wasn't Ostpolitik that brought about the collapse of East Germany. The beginning of the end began when the U.S. and the Christian Democratic/Free Democratic coalition government in Bonn led by Helmut Kohl resisted the Soviets' and Social Democrats' campaign against deployment of the intermediate-range ballistic missiles in West Germany. The next blow to the Communists came when East Germans fled to the West German embassies in Prague and Budapest to request asylum. After a stand-off, the GDR gave in and allowed them to transport the East Germans to freedom in the West. The final blow was when Gorbachev informed Honecker that Soviet troops would not be used to put down protest demonstrations in East Germany. The East German people also deserve great credit for the courage they showed in going into the streets to clamor for democracy. It turned out that it was Ostpolitik that was getting in the way of history.

Q: You mentioned you were liaison officer. Could you explain what you'd do, I mean some examples of how you operated and what you'd do?

BODDE: Yes, well, the French, British, and American liaison offices were the interface between the Allied ministers in Berlin and the city government of Berlin. The Allied legal position in Berlin was based on the legal principle that Berlin wasn't in East Germany. Nor was it part of West Germany. It was as if it was somewhere in limbo as one of the unresolved issues of WWII. So everything that happened had to be looked at as to how it might affect the legal status of Berlin — would it somehow weaken the Allied position or would it strengthen the Communists' position. The liaison officers would deal with nitty-gritty things like when the West Berlin government wanted to clean up the area in front of the Wall. The wall was built inside East German territory, so there may have been ten yards or so on our side of the Wall before you came to the actual dividing line, so it was part of East Berlin. They did that on purpose so that they could shoot you after you got over the Wall and so the West Berliners couldn't tear it down because it was in the Western Sectors. The East German no man's land was neglected and overgrown with

Library of Congress

weeds, bushes and trash. The West Berlin authorities wanted to clean it up. Anything that the city of Berlin wanted to do that might affect Allied rights or status had to be cleared with the Allied missions through the liaison officers. We would take the issue back to our missions and have the legal advisor look at it. Then there would be a decision and we would convey it to the Berlin Government. It really tested my language skills because unless you were native-born it was almost indecipherable. The memos were in German jargon called *Beamtendeutsch* - bureaucratic German.

Q: Official, bureaucratic Deutsche.

BODDE: Bureaucratic German. You'd get a memo, and it wouldn't even be lengthy; it would be just a couple of lines expressed in the bureaucratic German. We would have to figure out what it meant. While it wasn't as exciting working in Berlin when I was there as it was in the immediate post-war period — back then communist mobs tried to intimidate the elected officials and people were kidnapped — still there was always the threat of World War III breaking out which made it exciting. I learned a very important lesson in Berlin. Klaus Sch#tz was governing mayor. He had been one of the first Fulbright scholars in America. He spoke excellent English so my British and French colleagues and I always conducted our business with him in English. Then one day, a predecessor of mine, a couple of times removed, visited Sch#tz and I went along. They spoke German to each other and Sch#tz was an entirely different person than the man I had been dealing with. Instead of being the arrogant and short-tempered man who was unhappy that he had to deal with mid-grade Allied bureaucrats, Sch#tz was witty and much more open. I made a decision after that experience that whenever I spoke with a German politician, I would do it in German. I might struggle. But let me make the mistakes, not my German interlocutor. Let him or her feel comfortable. It paid off enormously. Most German politicians do not speak English. Even the present Chancellor spoke in German when he gave a talk at Georgetown during a visit last year. Kohl never mastered English in all the years he was in office.

Library of Congress

Q: I think that there was a French liaison officer and a British liaison officer. How well did you work together?

BODDE: Very well. They were very professional and supportive colleagues. I liked them very much. We did almost everything together. All three were invited to anything official. I think the job was probably better in a career sense for the American than it was for the other two. In Bonn my opposite number in the British Embassy was a man named Charles Powell. He later became Prime Minister Thatcher's personal private assistant and was very powerful. He now is Sir Charles Powell.

Q: Was there any problem? Often the French take a different course than the Americans. I mean, the people may be nice and all, but did you find yourself sort of having to deal with the Germans on one hand and the French on the other?

BODDE: Not so bad. It's interesting because when you read about the situation right after the war at Potsdam, the French were often a bigger problem than the Russians. In Berlin we celebrated Bastille Day, the Queen's Birthday, and the Fourth of July. During the French parade my wife whispered to me, "I thought the French lost the war." You wouldn't know that in Berlin for they acted very much like the victor. The French Zone in West Germany and the French Sector in Berlin were carved out of the American and British Zones and Sectors. In Berlin the French and we saw most things eye to eye. That wasn't the case when I was Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Department. Then the French could be very difficult. I used to joke that there must be no word for shame in French. The French diplomats could reverse their positions from one day to the next without showing any embarrassment.

As I said, there weren't a lot of differences on Berlin matters. Once in a while difficulties would pop up but that had more to do with the egos of the respective ministers than it did with serious policy disputes. We had the 25th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift when I was there. Well the airlift was primarily an American show with some British participation. The

Library of Congress

French hardly participated but the ceremony made it appear that we three had made equal contributions.

Q: Were you sort of reporting on the side on Berlin politics?

BODDE: Oh, yes.

Q: Later you had the Bonn perspective. Was it a different breed of cat?

BODDE: Yes, it sure was. Berlin saw everything in terms of its impact on status. The missions and the people seemed to think that they were the center of the universe. In reality, most promising politicians and business people left Berlin to work in West Germany. Later when I was in Bonn, Richard von Weizsaecker and I became friends when he was a member of the Bundestag. I arranged for his daughter to go on a high school exchange program and later sent him to the States on a leader grant. She was there during the 1976 presidential elections and she had the time of her life. He told me that her letters home gave him a real insight into American politics. One time at a lunch with him, I was bemoaning the fact that politicians with any real promise deserted Berlin for Bonn. The result, I complained, was that most of the Berlin politicians were hacks. Von Weizsaecker was born in Berlin and a few years after our conversation gave up his seat in the Bundestag to run for the post of governing mayor of Berlin. He was elected and did such an impressive job that he was elected federal president. I like to think that I may have had something to do with that important decision.

Until you settled the Berlin question, you hadn't resolved World War II. The West Germans and we wanted to keep the question of Berlin's future open and alive in public opinion. The danger was that the Wall and the division would, over time, become accepted as the normal course of events. One problem was that ambitious people would leave Berlin for greater career opportunities, which left the city with old people or young people avoiding military service in West Germany. You could not be drafted in the FRG (Federal Republic of Germany) military if you lived in West Berlin. The West German Government spent an

Library of Congress

enormous amount of money to keep Berlin vibrant. They subsidized companies to stay there and they subsidized the arts, and educational institutions. So Berlin politics were always interesting because they could have international implications, but at the end of the day they were city politics. Like being in Chicago - not unlike Chicago, where political bosses and precinct captains were important, but always lurking in the background was the EastWest struggle.

Q: Were there any problems, major incidents while you were doing this? I'm thinking about Americans getting in the wrong place or taking joyrides in tanks, or

BODDE: Exactly. Funny you mentioned that. One of the major incidents when I was there had to do with a drunk GI (soldier) and a combat-loaded tank. Maybe you've heard this story from someone else.

Q: I may have heard it from somebody; that's why it stuck, but I wasn't sure of the time.

BODDE: Root Phelps was the FSO at the mission who was the primary liaison with the military. He had a special military phone in his bedroom because he'd get calls day and night. If something happened at the Wall or if something happened at a checkpoint they would call Root for instructions. Often they were trivial calls: should we fly the flag this way or that, etc. One night he had already had four calls in the middle of the night. The phone rang and he was really furious, "What do you want now," he grunted into the phone. The voice on the other end said, "Mr. Phelps, there's a combat-loaded M1 Abrams tank headed for Checkpoint Charlie."

A GI had found his wife drinking with some other GI in a Gasthaus. He was drunk himself and got really angry. He was a tank driver so he went back to the tank park. He got in his tank, started it up and crashed out through the front gate. He apparently planned to defect to East Berlin with a U.S. tank. When tanks are not actually in combat, they have their turret turned around and the cannon facing the rear. Well, he had his cannon up and in the firing position. I don't think you can't drive a tank alone and fire the cannon, but you could

Library of Congress

bring it to a halt and fire away. You can just imagine what the East German guards must have been thinking when they saw this tank headed towards East Berlin with the cannon pointed at them. As the tank headed for Checkpoint Charlie the military police (MP) tried to corral it with MP sedans but they just bounced off the tank without stopping it. When he got to Checkpoint Charlie, he couldn't get through the anti-tank barriers so he turned around, and he headed back towards the other side of town to Checkpoint Bravo. Bravo was the entrance to the autobahn that goes from Berlin to West Germany through East Germany. When he got to the checkpoint he crashed through the American checkpoint but got hung up on the East German side which was manned by Russian troops. The tank had thrown a track. So there we had an Abrams tank with all the latest equipment stuck at the Soviet checkpoint. Well it just so happened that the captain of the guard on the American side and the captain of the guard on the Russian side had established a decent working relationship. The Russian calls our man up and says, "I got your tank here, and you've got one hour to get it out of here." They held the soldier for a few days and then sent him back. I talked to the chief army mechanic who was in charge of fixing it.. He said usually it takes three or four hours to get a track back on a tank but he proudly said we did it in less than an hour. I'm sure the Russian officer got in trouble for being so cooperative. The incident sure caused a bit of excitement.

There was a second lieutenant in Berlin who had just graduated from West Point. I met him when a bunch of young officers were assigned as escorts for the Berlin Airlift 25th anniversary ceremony. He was a cause c#l#bre at West Point. He had been accused of cheating but did not resign and they did have enough evidence to throw him out. So for four years he got the silent treatment. Nobody spoke to him except in the course of duty. Poor guy then had to do three more years in the army after graduation. Even in Berlin, West Pointers wouldn't talk to him. I must say he had the guts to stick it out but he was one of those people who are always involved in notoriety or controversy. There was an accident on the autobahn running through East Germany, and he became a hero saving somebody's life. Another time he was involved in an incident in East Berlin.

Library of Congress

There were always tensions about the Wall and you worried about screwing up whenever you went back and forth to East Berlin. We were encouraged to go over there to the museums and opera to demonstrate the Allies' right to enter East Berlin anytime they wished. We always worried whenever we went over there that we might do something to violate status such as surrendering our passports to an East German guard. I went through one time with my wife. You had to show the East German guard your passport through the car window, but not give it to him. So I held up my passport, she held up hers, and the East German guard kept shaking his head no. Oh boy, I thought now I am in trouble. There's going to be an incident. They're going to take us out of the car, and the U.S. Mission will go crazy. It turned out that in our nervousness I was holding up her passport, and she was holding up mine.

We had the famous duty train that ran every night between Berlin and Frankfurt. My wife used to visit her ill mother every week. It was a sleeper train, but the rail bed was terrible so you had a very bumpy ride. One time, they had a country-wide principal officers' meeting in Bonn, and Dave Klein invited Dick Barkley, who worked in the eastern affairs section of the mission, me and our wives to go with him and his wife in the ambassador's private railroad car. Each of the Big Four ambassadors still had a private railroad car that could be hitched to the duty train or other German trains. It was a relic left over from the occupation days. What an experience. Right out of the Gilded Age. I remember the train was stopped at a rail checkpoint at the border between East and West Germany. You could look out the window and see the Russian and East German guards stamping their feet to keep warm and there we were in the warm rail car drinking and dancing to rock and roll music - the ultimate in decadence.

Klein was a demanding officer, but if he liked you he could be very generous. He was a tough negotiator and expected a lot from the people who worked for him.

Q: What was his background?

Library of Congress

BODDE: He spent a lot of his career time in Germany. As minister in Berlin, he and Jock Dean were rivals, especially during the Quadripartite Agreement negotiations. Even if they hadn't had personality conflicts, Bonn and Berlin had very different perspectives on the negotiations. I've gotten to know Jock's brother, David, who is mild mannered and unassuming in contrast to Jock.

Q: Oh, David Dean, the China expert. I mean, I keep looking at the two because I've interviewed both of them, and how they could be brothers...

BODDE: Sort of the good twin-bad twin kind of thing, yes. No, David Dean is a very nice guy. He is a real Asian expert and has participated in key U.S.-China negotiations. I'm so glad he's doing the oral history because if you don't write it down or record it, it will be lost forever. He was there! Whatever his faults, Dave Klein was always very good to me

Q: Is he still around?

BODDE: No, he lives on the West Coast. He ran the American Council on Germany in New York City for some years and later moved to the West Coast

Q: When I was interviewing Jock on the Quadripartite Agreement, he said there was a great deal of concern at that time about the East Germans having a consulate general in West Berlin.

BODDE: Oh, yes.

Q: By this time, how was that working out? Was it a problem?

BODDE: It didn't turn out to be a great problem. I am sure the Soviets used it as a base for espionage activities but Berlin and West Germany were so riddled with East German spies that the addition of a Soviet consulate general didn't make very much difference. It was not unusual to turn on the TV and see someone you knew exposed as an East German spy.

Library of Congress

But yes, that was a big issue in the Quadripartite Agreement. Have you interviewed Nelson Ledsky?

Q: No, we're trying to get him. He's a -

BODDE: Nelson was Jock's right hand during the negotiations. He knows a lot. Over the years we have had our share of disagreements but he's a wonderful guy and very knowledgeable about Germany.

Q: We'll keep working on him. Well, then, you left Berlin in '74. You'd been there a year. And you went to Bonn, and you were in Bonn from when to when?

BODDE: 1974 to 1977.

Q: And you were what?

BODDE: I was a section chief of the internal affairs unit in the political section. In Bonn I worked for two of the best people in the Foreign Service, Frank Meehan and David Anderson. Frank was the political counselor and later served as ambassador to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. I worked for him for a year and learned a great deal. David was his deputy and the atmosphere in the political section was highly professional and lots of fun. My job took me outside of Bonn a great deal. I attended political conventions all over Germany and traveled extensively through the country during the national and state political campaigns. I didn't have a lot to do with the diplomatic community or the foreign ministry. I saw my colleagues at the embassy and I was active in the community association, but really the job was German-centered.

Q: I'm wondering, my experience, the twilight of my career, was consul general in Naples, and I had never served in Italy before, and I was watching these people up in Rome dealing with the exquisiteness of Italian politics, and it all was about the same, anyway; it had been the same since 1948.

Library of Congress

BODDE: What years were you there?

Q: I was there '79 to '81. But I was wondering, sometimes about the detailed reporting from the embassy in Rome. Were we getting deep into German politics?

BODDE: I'm glad you asked that question because it's really something I thought about a lot. When I was DAS, in the European Bureau I dealt with Italy a lot. Like most political officers, I found Italian politics fascinating, but you put your finger on a real problem in the Foreign Service. It is a problem of judgment. At the end of the day, when we talk about what quality defines the best Foreign Service Officers, it is their judgment. It's not intelligence; they're all intelligent. Yet one of the things is it's so easy to get caught up in — especially if you're doing internal politics — in the intricacies of domestic politics. You know what this faction or that faction is doing. I suspect the Department knew more about every faction and splinter group in China's Communist Party than it did about China's economy. It is a great temptation because you want to know as much as you possibly can. But I always stressed to the people that worked for me that we were there to look at what happens that affects American interests. If it doesn't affect American interests, it may satisfy our intellectual curiosity, but it should not be reported to Washington. It's the same thing with predicting elections. It is more important to analyze how the outcome of a foreign election is likely to affect U.S. interests than predicting the election results within a tenth of a point. We had five people in Rome covering Italian politics. That is overkill.

Q: What was the government like in '74-76?

BODDE: When I first went there, all the time I was there, the Social Democrats were in charge.

Q: Was it Willi Brandt?

BODDE: No, no. Before I left Berlin Brandt was forced to resign because his closest aide turned out to be an East German spy. Helmut Schmidt became the chancellor. I became

Library of Congress

a good friend with Schmidt's special assistant, Dieter Leister, which gave me exceptional access. I would travel around with Schmidt in the election campaigns. Schmidt was a right-wing Social Democrat, very smart, and pro-American. He was also arrogant and moody. In short he was a skilled, but flawed politician. He often would speak harsh truths to his party, and over the long run no politician can afford to do that. So after a while he was pushed aside.

I had some "firsts" when I was in Bonn. I wrote the first report on the Green political movement that later became a political force and now is the coalition partner of the ruling Social Democrats in Bonn. It was basically an anti-nuclear movement when I first wrote about it. While I did not write the first report on Helmut Kohl, my cables and airgrams were among the first to take him seriously as future chancellor material. The conventional wisdom at the time was that he was too provincial. Even worse, according to his critic Kohl lacked the political skills to outmaneuver the Social Democrats and his rivals in his own party. I argued that one of his most powerful advantages was that his opponents underestimated him and that he was a lot more skilled at party infighting than he was given credit for. Slowly, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) was making gains under his leadership. When I started reporting on him, Kohl was the then minister-president in the Rhineland Palatinate and then he became the CDU party faction leader in the federal parliament. The question I was interested in was if the CDU came into power under Kohl's leadership, what would it mean for U.S. policies and interests.

When he became chancellor, German public opinion, especially among youth, had become much more critical of the U.S. This was the fallout from Vietnam, and the 1960s student revolution in Europe. The generation of Germans who remembered CARE packages and the Berlin Airlift were leaving the scene. The number of German students studying in the United States was way down. The general knowledge of the United States was not what it had been. Kohl recognized what we call "the successor generation problem" and set about remedying it when he became federal chancellor. He instituted a large, active student exchange program, he promoted greater German non-governmental

Library of Congress

presence in Washington with think tanks like the German Marshall Fund and the German Historical Association. Although he did not speak English, he sent both his sons to Harvard.

Q: Our military was probably at its worst disciplinary situation, too, wasn't it?

BODDE: That was changing by the time I got to Berlin in 1973. The Army was over the worst of the post-Vietnam trauma by then. The all volunteer army changed things considerably. Discipline and morale were restored. The problem we had in Germany came from maintaining an overwhelming U.S. military presence 30 years after the end of the war. The German public was much less patient with the frictions caused by large numbers of foreign troops in a relatively small country. The political sensitivity and sophistication of the U.S. generals made a great difference in coming to grips with these problems. Colin Powell was V Corps commander when I was consul general in Frankfurt. He understood the problem and we worked closely together to find solutions. General John Galvin, who was VII Corps Commander in Stuttgart at the time, was also very politically astute which was an invaluable quality when he later became the NATO commander. Some of the other generals were less sensitive and acted as if it were unnecessary to accommodate German views. They were like bulls in a china shop: "I'm going to put my troops or helicopters where I want to and those damn Germans will just have to live with it." Of course, the quality of the U.S. Ambassador was a crucial factor in the bilateral relationship.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BODDE: Well, I served in Germany with a few ambassadors. When I served in Berlin and for the first two years in Bonn, Martin Hillenbrand was ambassador. Walter Stoessel was ambassador for my last year in Bonn. Later in the 1980s when I was consul general in Frankfurt, Arthur Burns and Richard Burt were the ambassadors. Hillenbrand was an old German hand and one of the most knowledgeable people in the State Department about Germany. Kissinger resented Hillenbrand's deep knowledge of Germany and often

Library of Congress

undercut him. Sometimes I would learn from the chancellor's aide that Kissinger was coming to Bonn before Kissinger had informed the ambassador. It was awkward to go tell Ambassador Hillenbrand that the Secretary of State was coming to Bonn. Walter Stoessel replaced Hillenbrand. He had been ambassador in Poland and the Soviet Union and later became the Deputy Secretary of State under Al Haig.

Hillenbrand was a pleasure to work for because he knew so much and if you talked to him about some German political development he knew exactly what you were talking about. He was a stickler for details and a sharp proofreader, and if you made a mistake he would spot it immediately. I was there about two weeks, and sent a cable out with a minor politician's name misspelled. Shortly after the cable went out a copy came back to my boss, Frank Meehan, with the error circled in red and a note in Hillenbrand's tiny script, "I think this is wrong." Frank sent it back with a note, "Marty, we do this every once in a while to see if you're on your toes." How many bosses would give you that kind of break? Frank also knew a great deal about Germany and was a very close friend of Hillenbrand.

It was a very congenial embassy to work in. David Anderson was a joy to work with and he was clearly a rising star. They made working at the embassy fun. Frank and David were only there for my first year, and then Dick Smyser replaced Frank. Have you interviewed him?

Q: Yes, I have.

BODDE: A very different type than Frank Meehan but he is smart, and a decent guy. And I must admit that he treated me well.

Q: *When Brandt went out and Schmidt came in, was there in a way a certain sigh of relief, because I just think of Brandt having this Ostpolitik, and there was always a concern he might give away the store. And the main problem we were concerned with - correct me if I'm wrong - was Germany turning neutral.*

Library of Congress

BODDE: Yes.

Q: And this Ostpolitik smacked of this, and then with Schmidt coming in with a harder nose, how did we feel about this?

BODDE: Oh, I think there was a sigh of relief in Washington. I don't believe Brandt was covertly seeking German neutrality, but his agenda was different than ours. Reportedly Brandt was so disenchanted with the lack of action on the part of the U.S. when the East Germans erected the Wall that he decided it was up to the Germans themselves to find a solution to the division of their country. As I said earlier, Ostpolitik did not play a major role in bringing about reunification. However, in one important respect Ostpolitik was a success. Brandt and Ostpolitik were instrumental in making Germany respectable in the international community again, especially among liberals. Someone once said that anti-Germanism is the liberal's anti-Semitism. Brandt had valid democratic credentials. He had opposed the Nazis and fled to Norway and Sweden. In fact, when he came back to Germany in 1945 he was wearing a Norwegian officer's uniform, something some Germans have never forgiven.

Q: He was in Norway, wasn't he, or someplace?

BODDE: Yes, he spent the war in Norway and Sweden. My Social Democrat friends would constantly tell me what a wonderful person he was and he certainly was much more popular in the party than Schmidt. I personally found him as cold as fish. I once went with George McGovern to call on Brandt at party headquarters in Bonn. It was after McGovern had lost his race for president and Brandt had resigned but was still SPD leader. Both of them, being somewhat flaky, hit it off well. The week after that, I was control officer for George Wallace but he didn't ask to see Willi Brandt. Helmut Schmidt was pro-American but he had no problem lecturing the U.S. President when he thought we were wrong or that he knew better. He liked Ford. He never connected with Carter.

Library of Congress

Q: In fact, it was quite the opposite, particularly after Carter pulled the rug out from under him.

BODDE: Carter's flip flop on deployment of the neutron bomb really strained U.S.-German relations. Schmidt had gone out on a limb politically, defending the bomb and Carter decided to kill the idea without informing Schmidt in advance. Schmidt was understandably furious. Sometime later, the chancellor's aide, Dieter Leister came to Washington and tried to see Jody Powell and the White House just brushed him off. It was typical of the way the Carter White House dealt with Germany. I have great respect for Schmidt. He was never loved in the party because he was to the right of the SPD mainstream, which was basically left wing. He was also arrogant and moody but was brilliant and basically correct on most issues. I traveled with him on his campaign train a few times and the word was don't talk to him in the morning or he would bite your head off. One time, I won an election bet from him. I was sitting in the press car with some American and British correspondents. Schmidt came into the press car and joined us. He used to drive his press officer crazy because he would much rather talk to the foreign correspondents than talk to the local German reporters. His press advisor would remind him that he was running for office in Germany not the U.S. We started talking about the U.S. elections and I offered to bet anyone at the table one deutschmark that Carter was going to win. Chancellor Schmidt said, "I'll take that bet." The Washington Post reporter held the bet. After Carter won, I wrote the chancellor thanking him for the deutschmark telling him that I had won a lot of money betting on his victory as well. I received a lighthearted letter in return. He was a very impressive guy.

Q: Were we concerned about rightist movements in Germany? I mean, this was always a concern, will the Nazis come again later?

BODDE: It was always a concern but it was wrong. I used to say then, and I would say it now, although it's gotten worse because of skinheads in East Germany, that there are more Nazis in Wisconsin than there are in Germany. But you did have to worry about the false perceptions in the U.S. of the new Germany. The Germans get a bad press in

Library of Congress

America. Many Americans are always looking for signs of resurgent Nazism. My American and British correspondent friends told me that whenever they wanted to be sure to get their stories in the paper they would work in a Nazi angle.

Q: Yes, why don't we cut it here? Is there anything I should put at the end, or shall we pick it up when you come back.

BODDE: I think there's probably some more stuff on Germany. Why don't I think about it, and if there isn't, we can move on.***

Q: Today is April 26th, 2000. This is an addendum to the interview with Bill Bodde. We found that some tape or something is missing, and so I'm going to turn this over to Bill, and I'll start questioning you, but tell me what we're dealing with.

BODDE: We're basically dealing with the period 1977 to 1987. During that period I left Germany and came back to the Department and worked in the East Asian Bureau. Then I went to the South Pacific and Hawaii and ended the period as consul general in Frankfurt. So we have my Pacific period and my Frankfurt consul general time, and finally the first year of my final tour in EUR.

Q: Okay, so let's take 1977. Where were you?

BODDE: In 1977 I was leaving Bonn. I had been, as we discussed, the chief of the internal political section, and the plan was for me to go back and be the deputy director of Central European Affairs, which included the two Germanies, Austria and Switzerland. However, the assignment officer in personnel felt that I spent too much of my career working on German affairs so I should do something else. The program Kissinger instituted to avoid over-specialization in any one area, the Global Outlook Program called GLOP, was no longer official policy. Yet my assignment officer still had a GLOP mentality. Actually I had only spent a total of four years working on Germany and to go to the deputy director job would have made a lot of sense. But he was adamant that I go somewhere else, so I said

Library of Congress

fine, I'd like to go to the War College. That wasn't available so I asked him what jobs were open. He mentioned six or seven jobs that required an exotic language or were obviously dead-end jobs.

I was concerned because, as you know, assignments affect your career very much. I'd been in the service about 15 years and was an FS-1. That meant that the next job would determine when, if ever, I got into the Senior Foreign Service. Well, the job he mentioned that looked the best of those he mentioned was deputy director of Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and the Pacific islands. I said to him, "Well, at least they speak English. I guess I could do that job," and his response was, "Well, Bill, I don't know if I can sell you to the East Asian bureau. You've never served there." I asked him, "What's this, Catch-22? You won't let me go where I'm a bona fide expert, and when I agree to go somewhere else you tell me, 'I'm not sure I can sell you because you lack experience in the region.'" He said, "I'll get back to you." A few days later he called me at midnight in Munich where I was covering a political convention. He told me that the East Asia Bureau would be delighted to have me. I was not enthusiastic about the assignment but it could have been worse. My friends at the Bonn bureaus of The Washington Post and The New York Times wanted to write articles using my assignment to illustrate the stupid personnel policies of the State Department. I told them that they would really torpedo my career if they did that.

As I said, I wasn't that excited about going back to this job. The German job was obviously what I wanted to do. I find it ironic when I think back. It proves something that I've told many junior officers. That is, you often don't know what's best for you. You think a particular job would really be career enhancing and it turns out to be a dud and another job, which you may take reluctantly, turns out to be a major breakthrough in your career. If I hadn't gone back and done that job handling the Pacific islands it is unlikely that I would ever have become an ambassador. It is almost impossible to get an ambassadorship in Western Europe.

Library of Congress

Q: No, you would have been sitting around speaking German in a Gasthaus somewhere.

BODDE: I probably would have ended my career as political counselor in Bonn. Getting pushed out of EUR turned out to be a very good thing. I just didn't know it at the time. I came back, opened up the bureau phone book and recognized one name. It was like joining the Foreign Service all over again and after 15 years that's a little tough. In EUR I was well known and in EAP (East Asia and Pacific Bureau) I was a complete outsider. Ed Hurwitz was the director in my new office. He had been bounced out of the Korean country directorship because he rightfully argued that we shouldn't reduce the number of troops in Korea, as President Carter wanted. Although eventually the White House dropped the idea Ed had been right at the wrong time and that is as bad as being wrong. Ed was very stubborn, and he was vocal in his opposition. So Holbrooke, who was assistant secretary, demoted him to country director for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific islands. Ed was obviously overqualified for that job, which meant there wasn't a lot for me to do as deputy. There was the director, a deputy, and two desk officers.

Q: What was your range of-

BODDE: Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific islands, basically. Oh, and one other thing the office did was act as the focal point in the Department for the Micronesian Political Status Negotiations. Dick Williams was deputy director before me. I don't know if you know Dick. He was consul general in Canton. He was ambassador to Mongolia but resident in Washington - and a fine officer. Well, he was doing the deputy job and devoted most of his time to the Micronesian negotiations. When I came on board he moved over to the inter-agency staffed Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations. Ambassador Peter Rosenblatt, a political appointee, was in charge and Dick became his deputy. I decided to carve out my niche in the East Asia Bureau working on the negotiations. The negotiations were extremely frustrating but very interesting. They helped make my career, because working on those issues brought me to the attention of the assistant secretary and the seventh floor. The Department paid attention to the status negotiations and we

Library of Congress

waged an ongoing battle to make sure the State Department had a paramount role in the negotiations.

Q: You had Navy, Interior-

BODDE: The three departments that were the most involved were State, Interior and Defense but many departments and agencies had an interest in the outcome of the negotiations. Each of the parties had a different and often conflicting interest. The counselor of the Department, Matt Nimitz, was the senior person in the government overseeing the negotiations. As luck would have it, I happened to have met him years earlier when he was clerking at the Supreme Court.

Q: Well, talk about that a second. You were doing this from '77. . . . the job was deputy office director to this part of East Asia - from when to when?

BODDE: I was in the East Asian Bureau from '77 to '80. For the first year I was Ed's deputy and concentrated almost entirely on the Micronesian negotiations. Most of the negotiating rounds took place in the Hawaiian Islands or Saipan in the Northern Marianas. I was the senior State Department representative to the negotiations from 1977-80. In those years Ambassador Rosenblatt and the team put the agreement together but it took about ten more years to bring it to fruition. Yet the period 1977-80 were the crucial years in negotiating the agreements.

Q: What were the issues at your time?

BODDE: Micronesia consists of over 10,000 islands spread over an area about the size of the continental United States. It runs from the Marianas in the west through the Caroline Islands to the Marshall Islands in the east. They had been a Japanese mandate under the League of Nations. After Japan pulled out of the League the Japanese militarized the islands and used them as the breadbasket to feed the Japanese army during the Pacific campaign in WWII. We fought some important battles in Micronesia during the

Library of Congress

war, such as Kwajalein and Palau. After the war, the future of Micronesia was a political and strategic issue for the U.S. and in some quarters it was a very emotional issue. We had liberated the islands at great costs in blood and treasure. At the end of the war we occupied Micronesia and repatriated thousands of Japanese settlers back to Japan. At that time there was a big argument within the U.S. Government about what to do with Micronesia. The conservatives argued we should incorporate it as an American territory, and the State Department and others argued that it should be put under UN control. The ultimate compromise was that it was made a United Nations strategic trust with the U.S. the trustee. As a strategic trust it came under the authority of the Trusteeship Council where we had a veto and not the General Assembly where we did not. The issue was important enough that when Roosevelt died, Truman was briefed about it on his first day in office. In 1948 it was declared a United Nations Trust Territory (TTPI) and the U.S. was designated the trustee.

By the way, the flights that carried the atomic bombs dropped on Japan left from Tinian Island in the Northern Marianas. As trustee we, by and large, left most of the islands alone. For a long time it was administered by the U.S. Navy and was off limits to visitors. The CIA used parts of it to train Taiwanese guerrillas and other spooky stuff. We tested nuclear weapons for over a decade in the Marshall Islands But in the rest of Micronesia the Micronesians for the most part were untouched by the administration. In 1950s the Interior Department took over the administration of the TTPI from the U.S. Navy, but Interior also did very little in the islands. This changed in the 1960s when there was growing pressure in the UN and in the islands for greater self -rule and eventual independence

Every year couple of years the UN Trusteeship Council would send a team out to report on conditions in the Trust Territory. Early in the '60's the UN report was very critical about conditions under the U.S. administration. President Kennedy sent out an economist, Tony Solomon, who later was Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs in the State Department, to assess the situation and make recommendations. The Solomon Report confirmed that things were really bad and recommended that the U.S. do something more for the

Library of Congress

Micronesians in order to protect the U.S. strategic interest in Micronesia. He also made the point that as a matter of conscience we had a moral obligation to help the Micronesians. Kennedy was assassinated shortly after the report reached his desk, so it became the Johnson Administration's task to respond to the report. The Johnson Administration did so with a vengeance. The U.S. immediately expanded education and health programs. Then in line with the philosophy of the Great Society that the way to solve problems was to throw money at them, the U.S. Government began to pour money and programs into the place. For example, Congress passed a Great Society bill to grant federal subsidies to build hospitals in poor areas. The bill, like many such bills, applied to the 50 states plus the U.S. territories and the Trust Territories of the Pacific islands. Consequently, we would build a hospital in the islands without an infrastructure to support it, such as adequate electrical power. The programs were often inappropriate and always expensive. We weaned the Micronesians off their traditional and healthy traditional food to Spam and junk food.

Well, over time, with pressure for decolonization around the world, the people of Micronesia - at least the political leadership - started to lobby for more autonomy and eventually for full sovereignty. Full independence was not in the cards so they were prepared to settle for some sort of arrangement that was as close to independence as possible. Now probably the average Micronesian didn't want independence at all; he was happy to be tied to the United States. But the leadership wanted the maximum degree of autonomy, and they pushed for it. Negotiations broke off for a while. At the same time Micronesia was breaking up into mini-states. We settled with one group of islands called the Northern Marianas. That was before my time. We signed a commonwealth agreement with the Northern Marianas, which in effect made them a U.S. territory with special unique powers. Even today, some of these unique powers are causing problems.

The negotiations I was involved with concerned the rest of Micronesia. The negotiations had been broken off for a while because of charges that the U.S. was using the CIA to spy on the Micronesian negotiators. I haven't seen this story proven, but everybody in

Library of Congress

Micronesia accepts it as conventional wisdom. The story is - it's a wonderful story, and it sounds possible to me, knowing the islands - that the CIA put a bug in a lamp in the room where the Micronesian delegation met. Then in good island fashion, one of the guys saw this lamp and thought, well, this would be nice to have at home. So he borrowed it. "Borrowed it" is often an euphemism for "taking" in the islands. People are always borrowing things from you. So he took it and put it in his bedroom. Reportedly, when the Agency recovered the bug they got some very titillating erotic noises, and no clues to the Micronesians' negotiating strategy. If true it was stupid because we could have found out what they wanted by developing an atmosphere of trust in the negotiations.

Q: Well, actually, most of the negotiating was done, really, wasn't it, by American lawyers?

BODDE: Well, at first the Peace Corps volunteers or U.S. Legal Services advised the Micronesians. We had one of the biggest Peace Corps programs in the world in Micronesia. Early on, some of them organized a legal assistance program to teach the Micronesians their rights concerning the U.S. Government. This was during the Vietnam War period, so a lot of the kids in the Peace Corps were critics of the government. Many volunteers were there because they didn't want to go to Vietnam, and so sticking it to the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and Washington was right up their alley. In a more productive vein the volunteers advised the Micronesians on drawing up their constitutions and so on. Some of the young Peace Corps lawyers were very skilled.

It didn't take the Micronesian leaders long to figure out how Washington works. They concluded that high-powered Washington lawyers were most likely to get them the best deal. In fact, the Micronesians tried to get the U.S. Government to directly pay for their lawyers but we refused. However, in reality ninety percent of the Micronesian government's income came from USG grants. So in reality we were paying the lawyers. They hired such top Washington law firms as Covington and Burling and Clifford and Warnke. The United States, in fact, was negotiating against itself. The lawyers turned it into a very confrontational negotiation, and they created an adversarial relationship. I felt it

Library of Congress

would have been better to have a negotiation where you sit down and ask, "What do you want? What do I want? What do we have to do to give us both what we need?" That wasn't what we did. It was a lawyer-driven negotiation. The focus was on contingencies. If you do this in the future, we'll do that; if you don't do this, we'll do this. I once said in frustration, "I thought we came here to arrange a marriage, and it sounds like we're drawing up a divorce agreement." Well, now prenuptial agreements are more common. The Micronesian negotiations were more like a prenuptial agreement. The thrust was, "Boy, if you do that, we're going to sock it to you!"

The State Department, and I blame myself as much as anyone else, was probably too hung up on the legal questions of political status. We worried too much about what their precise legal international status would be. Why free association with the U.S. rather than independence? Well, when anyone new joined the delegation and saw how complex the free association relationship was going to be they would ask, "Why don't we just let them become independent and do a treaty for base rights or strategic denial. The answer they got was that independence was not an option because we would never be able to sell independence to Congress. Congress and the Defense Department allegedly were concerned that independence would put strategic denial and our missile target range in the Marshall Islands at risk. The maximum they would agree to would be free association. Originally we maintained that free association would essentially be an arrangement where the U.S. would be in charge of Micronesia's foreign policy, and Micronesians would be fully in charge of their internal affairs. Well, they kept pushing the envelope until we agreed that under free association the Micronesians were responsible for both foreign policy and domestic policy, but we had veto power if they did something in foreign relations that affected our responsibilities for their security. In those days that meant permitting the Soviets or the Chinese to do something in Micronesia that negatively impacted upon our security interests. . Q: Well, I think, wasn't the key thing, from our point of view, called "strategic denial"? Could you explain what that is?

Library of Congress

BODDE: I'm glad you mentioned that. Yes, the Pentagon was still hung up about strategic denial. Strategic denial meant that we had the right under the Compacts of Free Association to deny use of the area to any possible adversary. I think the value of strategic denial was overrated. We didn't have strategic denial in most places in the world, and we could have survived without it in Micronesia. For the U.S. the strategic jewel in the crown was the U.S. Army missile range on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Right after the war ended we used Kwajalein as a staging area for the nuclear bomb tests in Bikini. Later we used Kwajalein for missile tracking and finally as a target area for testing intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). We fire the ICBMs from California and they land in Kwajalein lagoon, which is the largest lagoon in the world. We surrounded the lagoon with state-of-the-art radar and all kinds of measuring instruments. Not only could you measure the accuracy of the missiles but also you could actually recover some of the pieces of the warhead. It was then and remains an invaluable asset in developing missiles and missile defense.

Q: ICBM is Intercontinental Ballistic Missile.

BODDE: We had to have Kwajalein and we had to have Kwajalein locked up in the agreement in a such a way that the Marshall Islanders couldn't sell it, give it away or somehow force us out of it, at least for many years beyond the duration of the compact. In addition to Kwajalein and strategic denial there were some other options on land use for training areas or even U.S. bases at some time in the future. Under the Compacts of Free Association the U.S. is responsible for the Freely Associated States' defense. During the course of the negotiations Micronesia broke up into three separate nations. The final price tag was over two billion dollars over 15 years for the three countries. The three had a total population of about 150,000!

We had wanted them to stay together because it would have been easier to deal with one government rather than three. There would also have been some economies of scale for them as well. But it wasn't to be because two of the three island groupings felt they would

Library of Congress

get more money and be better off if they were separate. For example, the Republic of the Marshall Islands was unwilling to share the Kwajalein bargaining chip with the rest of Micronesia. The Palau Islands thought they could do better on their own because in those days it was believed that Palau might be a fallback if the U.S. pulled its bases out of the Philippines. So they broke up into three countries. The third group which became The Federated States of Micronesia had no strategic bargaining chip except "strategic denial" but contained about three-fourths of the Micronesian population.

In fact, the Palauans didn't settle until some years after the other two because when the Palauans drew up their constitution, they put in an anti-nuclear clause. The U.S. couldn't accept the ban because we wanted the right to move nuclear weapons and nuclear ships through the area. So before we would agree to free association with Palau, they had to change this clause in the constitution. They finally did so, but it took many years. To amend their constitution took a two-thirds vote. When they did get a two-thirds vote in favor of dropping the ban, the opponents went to court and tied it up.

One thing we did create in Micronesia was a litigious culture. In the past, the Palauan tribes frequently fought with each other, and they killed each other with clubs, spears, or whatever. The Palauan chiefs were masters in manipulating whatever foreigner who happened to show up. The chief would convince the visiting warship captain that his tribe had always been the true friends of the visiting power. Whatever dastardly deeds were done in the past was the work of their enemies. Therefore the visitor should help them defeat the other tribe. The next time a war ship from a different county showed up, the tribe that had been defeated would often convince the new visitors that they had been wronged and needed their help to redress the injustice. The Pacific islanders manipulated foreign powers then and they manipulate foreign powers now. It has become a game among some of the Pacific island mini-states to play China off against Taiwan. For a while they will recognize one and then later make a deal to switch to the other when the price is right.

Library of Congress

From the very beginning I was impressed with the Pacific islanders' political and negotiating skills. They were as good as any negotiators I saw in Europe or Asia. Representatives from these tiny islands were able to negotiate with the United States or any other country and get a pretty good deal. My theory is that if you live on an island, you either find ways to work out disputes through negotiations, or you fight. You do not have the luxury of space so that you can avoid your enemies. In the old days they either negotiated a settlement or they fought and the victor killed or banished the loser. They don't engage in physical combat anymore, instead they use their well developed political and negotiating skills, not to mention their legal knowledge.

Anyhow, Micronesia broke up into three nations. We settled first with The Federated States of Micronesia and The Republic of the Marshall Islands and later with Palau on a 15-year contract, essentially. Collectively they are called The Freely Associated States. Some parts of the compacts are automatically extended after 15 years, and the money continues at the old rate. Some parts are renegotiable after 15 years, and that process began in 1999. The Freely Associated States are second only to Israel and Egypt in per capita financial assistance from the United States.

I never thought at the time that one day I was going to live with the consequences of our negotiations as U.S. Ambassador to the Marshall Islands. What I found out after I became ambassador was that the U.S. didn't enforce its oversight responsibilities. The U.S. simply did not audit the money. We basically gave them the money and walked away. Over the 15 years they managed to squander most of the money and perhaps even made the place worse off than it was before the compacts. I testified in Congress, after I'd left the Service, that we did more harm to the Marshall Islands with the money than we did with the bombs that we tested there. Of course we did harm with the bombs, but the harm was limited to a few islands and a small percentage of the inhabitants who were forced to relocate to other islands. The health effects of the radiation are still the subject of debate and negotiations.

Library of Congress

However, the negative effects of this huge sum of the money are clear. It created a fraudulent economic base for these countries and set back real economic development. It engendered tremendous corruption and further fed the culture of dependency. Now we didn't create the dependency mentality among the islanders, which goes way back. Throughout their colonial history the islanders waited for outside powers to bail them out when they suffered natural disasters. But we've made it much worse. And we changed the assistance from providing rice or other basic foodstuffs or to help them rebuild after a hurricane to welfare payments. We provided money in big amounts - I mean there are now millionaires in Micronesia. Of course, only a tiny proportion of the landowners are millionaires and most people have very little. Micronesia faces terrible health and social conditions. They have diabetes and sexually transmitted diseases at epidemic levels as well as widespread malnutrition among the children. Given the amount of money we have given them it should look like Beverly Hills; instead, much of Micronesia looks like an economically depressed area.

Well, anyhow, I had been doing the Micronesian negotiations for a year, and the powers that be in the front office of the East Asia and Pacific Bureau and the Department counselor were happy. Then Dick Holbrooke made a trip to the South Pacific over the holidays. I guess this would have been the '77 holidays - you know, Christmas, New Years. Anyhow, he went out to Samoa. I think he also went to Papua New Guinea. When he came back he was all excited about these islands. He decided - I think very wisely - that in an office containing Australia and New Zealand together with the mini island nations, the islands were going to get little attention and consideration. He decided to split the office in two, and instead of two desk officers, a deputy and a director, to have one desk officer and a director in each office. I thought that was a good move. The problem was that when he did this he thought that I should be the desk officer and not the Director. He had promised the job to somebody else. Ten or twelve years earlier I'd been the Sweden and Finland desk officer and I wasn't about to become a desk officer for even smaller places. So I went to see him and I told him that while I thought his idea for the

Library of Congress

new office was fine, I did not want to be a desk officer again and I would look for a job in another bureau. Not surprisingly, Holbrooke was furious and told the Director General that I was being petty. Of course, Holbrooke himself would never stand still for being demoted. Fortunately for me, the deputy assistant secretaries, Bob Oakley and Bill Gleysteen, were more sympathetic and wanted me to stay.

Q: Bill Gleysteen.

BODDE: Bill Gleysteen, a fine gentleman. They both called me in - particularly Gleysteen - and said, "Look, you've done an excellent job. We want to keep you. Stay cool. We'll work it out." Well, they did work it out, and I became the director of the new office of Pacific islands affairs. I was lucky because just then an FSO named Harlan Lee, who was a real Pacific islands expert, was looking for a job. He actually had a master's degree in Pacific island studies from the University of Hawaii. Harlan was a godsend, because when we set up the office, we found out we were one of the few places in Washington where you could get any information on the Pacific islands. So you would get phone calls all the time. Can you use an international driver's license in Fiji? or Who is next in line to be the King of Tonga? Questions like that. A couple of the Pacific island nations had embassies in New York and the ambassadors were jointly accredited to the UN and the United States, but there were none resident in Washington.

Dick Holbrooke remained very interested in the area. Right after the office was set up, I went out and made my first five-week trip to the region. It is an enormous region taking up about one-third of the Earth's surface. Most of the area is ocean and the islands are very scattered. When you go out there, you don't decide your itinerary - the airline schedule determines it. In some of these places, the plane comes and goes once a week. You either spend an hour and go back with the plane you came with or you spend a week.

On my first trip I went to a meeting of the South Pacific Commission in Noumea in the French territory, New Caledonia. Then I went over to Vanuatu, in the New Hebrides, which

Library of Congress

was jointly ruled by France and the UK. From there I went to Tahiti, which was of course lovely, and finished up in Western Samoa and American Samoa. The trip took five weeks, and when I came home my wife was very happy to see me again. However, when I went back to work, Holbrooke's special assistant, Ken Quinn, told me "Bill, Holbrooke is going with a delegation that's being led by John Glenn out to your territory. The Solomon Islands are becoming independent. Glenn will head the delegation because he was a Marine fighter pilot in the Solomons during World War II. In addition to Glenn and Holbrooke the delegation will include a bunch of friends and supporters of the President. I'll give up my seat on the plane to you, because if you're going to be in charge of the islands, you'd better be on that trip." That's the kind of guy Ken was. He gave up his seat and I went on the trip.

Q: Much to the joy of your wife.

BODDE: In fact, I told Ken, "You better break the news to my wife because she will kill me." He said, "I'll handle Holbrooke and you handle your wife." So I went home and told her. She was not happy, but she understood. It was obvious that if I were to establish myself as country director I had to go on the trip. In fact, it turned out to be a defining moment in my career. Pat Kennedy was the administrative control officer, and I was the substantive one. We went to Papua New Guinea and then the Solomon Islands.

As you know, on a trip like that, with those kinds of people, the atmosphere sometimes gets a bit tense. If things got screwed up the Department would look bad and Holbrooke would go ballistic. Before we flew to the Solomon Islands we stopped in Papua New Guinea. We took a regular military 727 to Papua New Guinea from Hawaii. In Port Moresby we switched to a C-130, and we flew up to Popondetta. There we switched again, this time to little missionary planes and flew into the jungle for a couple of hours. From the jungle landing strip, we walked for an hour to a village named Numba. It was really remote. It was the real thing. A cargo cult village that had practiced cannibalism not too many years ago, Numba had its first contact with white people in 1938. A missionary couple who

Library of Congress

lived there for some years translating the Bible into the local language arranged our visit. You find such missionaries throughout Papua New Guinea from a Protestant group called the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Q: Yes, they're big in Latin America, too, with the Indian tribes.

BODDE: Yes. And of course they were accused, I think, in Latin America of working for the CIA.

Q: Yes, they've had trouble there.

BODDE: As far as I know they were accepted in Papua New Guinea. We stopped at their regional headquarters in Popondetta. The missionary women had baked a big cake in the form of an American flag for us to bring to Numba because we would be there on the 4th of July. Generally speaking, in the Pacific islands, you don't just enter a village. I mean, you don't just show up. Your visit must be arranged beforehand. If not, you may run into difficulties. So this missionary couple had negotiated the arrangements for an American group, led by John Glenn, to visit the village. Before the villagers agreed to the visit they had a long theological debate. They knew John Glenn had been an astronaut and that he'd gone to Heaven. The theological issue was had he returned to Earth because God had rejected him or did his safe return mean that God had blessed him? Fortunately, they came to the conclusion that John Glenn had been blessed and he could lead us into the village.

I'll never forget walking to the village. We walked for an hour through the jungle, and came to a clearing leading up a hill to the village. As we started up the hill, warriors from the village came rushing out of the jungle. They were all dressed in their war paint and carried war clubs and spears. It was a mock attack to welcome us, but for a minute you didn't know. Later we sat on mats in the men's house for lunch, although we had women on our delegation, and they were allowed in the men's house for this one occasion. The Americans were served taro, breadfruit and sweet potato while the village men ate the

Library of Congress

American flag cake. It was weird watching a very fierce-looking man dressed in a loincloth, with a bone through his nose scarfing down the Stars and Stripes. It was really something. At one point, Senator Glenn was talking to a group of villagers through a translator who was a representative in the national parliament. He had come home to be there for our visit. The villagers wanted to know how fast Glenn had traveled in his space capsule? I thought it was very clever the way Glenn handled the question. He asked them how far Numba was from Popondetta? I don't remember how many miles it was but for them it was about a three-week walk. And then he said, "Okay, now, follow me. We're in the space capsule over Numba. Now count with me one-two-three-four. Now you are in Popondetta." They grasped the idea right away and started to cheer and dance. This idea that you could move at that kind of speed to them was just unimaginable. It was an exciting visit.

The independence ceremonies in the Solomons were impressive. They took place in the capital of the Solomon Islands, Honiara, on the island of Guadalcanal. I am sure that name means something to you. It was the first major battle in the U.S. effort to drive the Japanese out of the Pacific islands and a bloody battle it was. They didn't have the facilities to put up many VIPs in Honiara. Holbrooke stayed with the Peace Corps director, since he had been a Peace Corps director himself. The Glenns were accommodated at the best hotel with other heads of delegation, and the rest of us stayed on two U.S. Navy frigates we had sent to the ceremonies. In the course of the next few days Glenn decorated an Australian with a Bronze Star for his heroic actions as a coast watcher in W.W.II. The coast watchers were Australian and British civilians who stayed behind enemy lines when the Japanese invaded and reported by radio on the movements of the Japanese Navy. They were real heroes because if they were caught, and many were, they were immediately executed.

We also met Sergeant Major Vouza, who has since died. Vouza, a Solomon Island policeman, was a scout for U.S. Marines during the battle of Guadalcanal. The Japanese captured him. He was tied to a tree and bayoneted many times until he was left for dead because he would not betray the Marines' positions. He chewed his way through the

Library of Congress

ropes and crawled back to the Marine lines where he refused medical treatment until he had sketched out the Japanese positions. The Marine Corps was so impressed with his courage that they made him an honorary Marine Corps Sergeant Major. Until he died, he would get up every morning, put on his uniform, and raise and salute the American flag. Over the years, hundreds of Marine veterans visited him to pay their respects.

The independence ceremonies were held in a huge open-air stadium. Seating for the dignitaries was on one end and the other three sides were grass hillsides filled with thousands of Solomon Islanders. In the parade around the running track of the stadium there were very smart looking British troops, other military detachments, a bagpipe band from Papua New Guinea and a U.S. Navy detachment from our two frigates. The U.S. sailors had never done much drilling so it was a rag tag group in comparison to the other detachments. But when they entered the stadium with the Stars and Stripes in the lead, the whole three sides erupted with the thousands of Solomon Islander joyously shouting "Go GI Joe!" They had not forgotten the Americans. The British officials were not amused.

Naturally things go wrong on these visits, and Pat Kennedy and I spent a great deal of time picking up the pieces. By the time we finished the visit I was golden. I had become Holbrooke's prot#g#; the man he had picked for this job, heh, heh. And two years later, he made me an ambassador over the objections of Warren Christopher and the Director General. I became an ambassador as an FS-1, which has not happened very often in the Foreign Service. So this visit became a turning point in my career.

Q: You mentioned that you were at a meeting and you had New Caledonia and Noumea. Can you talk a bit about, well, this whole time that you were dealing with island affairs, about the role of the French there?

BODDE: Sure. And it was an interesting role that they played. The French had two major Pacific island colonies. They had more than two, but the two major ones were New Caledonia, which is one of the world's major sources of nickel. The French never give up

Library of Congress

anything easily. They also had French Polynesia and that was particularly important to them because that's where they did their nuclear testing. They shared sovereignty with the United Kingdom over the New Hebrides. Many of the French colons settled in the New Hebrides when they were forced out of Algeria. Some also settled in New Caledonia but there were many more of them in the New Hebrides.

Q: The pieds noirs.

BODDE: Yes, so they were very unwilling to be kicked out again. Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia, had been a major staging area for the United States in World War II. That's where we had our South Pacific headquarters commanded by General Douglas MacArthur. The five-sided wooden buildings, rotting when I was there, were called the little Pentagon and are now the headquarters of the South Pacific Commission (SPC). The SPC is a regional organization that includes the former Pacific colonies, the French and American territories, as well as Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., the UK and France. In fact, Noumea, which looks like you dropped a French provincial city into the middle of the jungle, still has sections that kept their American military designations such as the motor pool or the staging area. During the war the city was full with thousands of American troops. It is pretty clear that the independence movements in the Pacific colonies were an unintended consequence of the massive Americans presence there in World War II. We were there to protect Australia and New Zealand from invasion, drive the Japanese out of the islands, and eventually to conquer Japan. We were not there to foster independence movements against our wartime allies the British and the French.

The indigenous peoples saw American troops, including African Americans, who were armed, who were powerful, and who were empowered. This, combined with the generally more democratic open sort of view of the Americans, had an enormous influence. Up until then the only people in the islands who wielded real power were white people. Only white people owned guns or commanded armed people. Well, all of a sudden they observed dark skinned people who looked like them were armed and had power in their own right.

Library of Congress

This impressed the indigenous people and they began to demand control over their own destinies.

The French, unlike the British, held on to their territories very tightly. They incorporated New Caledonia and French Polynesia into metropolitan France and they gave them seats in the national parliament. They're now changing their status in name if not in reality. Just recently they've changed their designation to "overseas countries," even though they remain a part of France. As a consequence, even though the French territories were part of the consular district of the U.S. Embassy in Fiji, the ambassador in Suva was not accredited to them. The American Ambassador in Paris was accredited to the French Pacific territories. We issued thousands of visitor's visas to French civilians and military families to transit the U.S. and visit Disneyland etc. At one time we had a U.S. consul in Tahiti but over time, we stopped staffing it. Then the French moved their nuclear testing from North Africa to Tahiti and, low and behold, a U.S. consul shows up in Tahiti. The French officials suspected that the new consul was a CIA officer. De Gaulle personally issued a command ordering the U.S. consul out of Tahiti. For the last 20 years or so the local Tahitian authorities have been lobbying for the U.S. to reappoint a consul. They want more convenient consular services. Now they have to do it by mail or go to Suva, Fiji.

I would get a very warm welcome when I visited Tahiti because the locals wanted me to arrange for an honorary consul and the French wanted to know what I was up to. The first time I went, I was put up at the French Governor General's house - he was away - and provided with a car and driver. Wonderful treatment, but it meant they knew my every move. What are these Americans doing there? Was I there to give support to the independence movement? In reality I was just interested in learning about the political situation and visiting with the local American business people. There was a small American community in Tahiti, including the son of the Rutgers family of Rutgers University in New Jersey. He was married to the daughter of one of the co-authors of the Mutiny on the Bounty trilogy.

Library of Congress

Q: *Oh, yes, Nordhoff and Hall.*

BODDE: Nordhoff and Hall. I think it was Hall's daughter. They're wonderful books, by the way. I just reread them.

Q: *Oh, yes, Pitcairn's Island, Men Against the Sea -*

BODDE: Especially Men Against the Sea.

Q: *Yes, a tremendous story.*

BODDE: If you like those books, there's a wonderful book about Nordhoff and Hall you might enjoy reading. It's hard to get a hold of, but I have the paperback, In Search of Paradise by Paul L. Briand, Jr. Did you know they were both aces in the First World War?

Q: *With the Lafayette Escadrille.*

BODDE: Right. In any event, it was fun to talk to these American expatriates. Americans own some of the major hotels. We considered appointing a consular agent, and I was looking at possible candidates when I went out there. The problem with consular agents is you need someone who's influential in the place. That means once you appoint them you're stuck with them, because they are influential.

Q: *And they live forever, and they're there.*

BODDE: So we never appointed one. But I seriously considered it. I think it probably would have been a good idea. The French were and are very interested in the Pacific and particularly in Tahiti. They had other smaller colonies such as Wallis and Futuna, one of the few island groups I haven't been to. At the same time the French were remarkably arrogant and often culturally insensitive, especially about the Melanesians. I remember on that first five-week trip I went to the New Hebrides, and it was not yet independent. There was a French Governor General and a British Governor General running the

Library of Congress

condominium. Everything came in twos. When you arrived at the airport you could go through the French-controlled customs and immigration section that was manned by natives dressed like gendarmes. Or you could go through the British-controlled customs and immigration where the natives looked like the British customs service. There would be a French hospital and a British hospital or a French school and a British school. So it was a very wacky place.

I attended a dinner at the French Governor General's house. He was a very important person, especially during this transition time when they were moving towards independence. The French had reluctantly agreed to independence and the French settlers were up in arms. A very astute young French anthropologist was at the dinner and we were talking about land issues. We agreed that land is so important to Pacific islanders because there's so little of it and because it's generally communally owned and tied to the islanders identity. This created great problems when the white colonists bought land. The natives didn't realize that when they sold their land they were giving it up forever. They thought they were more or less leasing it. To this day there remains a tension between the outsiders who bought land and the indigenous peoples over ownership. The governor general was completely dismissive. His attitude was "What are you talking about, these people are primitive and have no culture." He was missing the point. He was equally dismissive because I didn't speak French. If you don't speak French, you're not civilized. When the French left the New Hebrides they took everything they could with them, including the light bulbs. They not only left grudgingly but it appears that they gave clandestine support to an uprising against the new government after independence.

They didn't leave New Caledonia, and the independence movement there had grown as well. In Noumea, New Caledonia, you had a feeling what apartheid must have been like. I've never been in South Africa, but here you had this French city. It looked like a provincial French city when you flew in. It was mostly populated by white French colonialists walking around with long loaves of bread and so on. It started out as a prison colony, as did

Library of Congress

Australia, and it is filled with their descendants, French administrators and military, and Vietnamese who had fled Vietnam during the French-Vietnam war.

Q: From Tonkin mainly.

BODDE: Yes. They were there. And some natives from Wallis and Futuna as well. But the Melanesian indigenous people were not in Noumea but out in the bush. If they were in the city they were doing menial jobs. The Kanakas, as the indigenous people are called, have become more independence minded. There has been some violence, and I think the Socialist Government in France is making a greater effort to reach some accommodation that would give them more autonomy. There is less support for independence in Tahiti, because the French have poured in so much money in connection with their nuclear testing. I think the independence movement there is relatively quiescent now, but if French government financial support declines with the end of testing it might become active again.

The head of the Hawaiian Tourist Bureau once took a delegation to the Pacific islands to look at tourism in the islands. The idea was to see if the Hawaiian experience with tourism could help the islanders develop their tourist industry. When he came back he said, "The view of tourism in the South Pacific is, 'Stay home and send the money.'" That's certainly the view of many French Polynesians. But that is not the way the world works. If you want the tourists' money you have to accept the tourists with it.

But our dilemma was that while we didn't sympathize with French policy in the South Pacific we did cooperate on strategic issues. You said, "in the mad days" meaning during the Cold War when we participated in joint military exercise and so on. We had then and, I assume, still have close military cooperation and nuclear cooperation with the French. Therefore, we didn't officially oppose their testing in the South Pacific. Of course, our hands were not clean either because we had tested nuclear weapons in the Pacific islands as well. The British and we stopped testing in the '50's but the French didn't stop until about two years ago now. Over the years nuclear testing became a bigger and

Library of Congress

bigger issue in the region. At first mostly outsiders promoted it, but the Pacific islanders themselves came to strongly oppose testing. New Zealand was the loudest critic of French testing in the Pacific. You remember when French intelligence agents blew up a Greenpeace vessel in Auckland harbor.

Well, you can imagine the reaction to that caper. It was a remarkably stupid thing to do. You wonder sometimes who's in charge. That said, there is a genuine understandable feeling by the Pacific islanders that they don't want testing in their region. They say if it's so safe, test in your backyard.

Q: Yes.

BODDE: Another cultural factor is that we look upon oceans as barriers and divisions. In fact, before the intercontinental ballistic missile and the long-range airplane, it was a great strategic advantage to have a large ocean between you and possible enemies. That was one of the great strategic strengths of the United States. On the other hand, the Pacific islanders look at the ocean primarily as a highway. That's how they got where they are. For them it is a web linking the islands together, and environmentalists have the same view. For example, if you dump nuclear waste in the ocean off Japan it can have negative effects way down in the islands. If you blow up nuclear weapons under water in Tahiti, the consequences will not remain within the 200 miles zone of French Polynesia. So the islanders were against testing. It put us in an awkward position because we wanted good relations with the island nations, but we did not want to endanger our military cooperation with the French.

There was an ongoing dispute in the State Department between the East Asian and Pacific Bureau and the European Bureau on the question of whether the U.S. should sign the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. The Australians, primarily, were drafting the SPNFZ (spin fizz, as it is called) Treaty with the South Pacific islanders, and they did so in close consultation with the U.S. Therefore they rightly thought they had negotiated an

Library of Congress

agreement that the United States could live with. But the European Bureau prevailed and we told them we couldn't sign it, nor would we criticize the French for not signing it. Later on, I believe we did sign it, but the U.S. Senate has not ratified it. Later the French gave up testing, and they signed it too.

But in the old days, during the Cold War, we weren't ready to do so. So our relationship with the French and the Pacific islands was sometimes fraught with tension.

Q: So did you find yourself, while you were the director of this thing, going head-to-head with people in our European Bureau?

BODDE: I found it was not just the European Bureau that ran roughshod over our South Pacific interests. One of the good things about setting up a separate office for the Pacific islands is that for the first time they had a friend in court, so to speak. I found myself tugging at the sleeves of my colleagues in many bureaus who were often about to do something that was going to negatively affect the islands. Either they didn't know, or they didn't care. I would fight the good fight even though I lost a good amount of the time.

Interestingly enough, years later when I was deputy assistant secretary in the European Bureau the U.S. abstained in a UN vote on the issue of whether the UN Decolonization Committee should look at French territories. We did so to please the islanders and the French were incensed that we would look after our own interests - not that they wouldn't do so in a New York minute. They often abstain or even vote against us. Not long after the vote I was at a meeting in Paris between then French Prime Minister Chirac and Vice President Bush. The only other people in the room were Chirac's foreign policy advisor and myself. The French brought up the vote and wanted to know how could we do such a thing? I explained that the U.S., like the French, had interests in the Pacific. We believed that by abstaining we were not voting against you, but were sending a signal to our Pacific island friends that we understood their concerns. "What interests, what friends?" the

Library of Congress

foreign policy advisor said with a sneer, "Vanuatu?" You know, in other words, with those little natives out there? I mean, it was the most perfect arrogant French response.

You had to see a place like Noumea to believe it. I guess maybe in Africa there are similar places but it is as if you had parachuted a French provincial town into the jungle. But it did mean good restaurants and good food as the French flew in fresh cheese and other foods twice a week from Paris.

Yes, the French were certainly a factor to deal with in the South Pacific. As I mentioned earlier, the victorious allies set up a regional economic organization after the war called the South Pacific Commission - it's now called the South Pacific Community - and the headquarters is in Noumea. It used to consist of the so-called metropole countries: France, the UK and the U.S., and their colonies and territories as well as New Zealand and Australia. As the colonies became independent they belonged in their own right. It was set up to do non-political things such as health, education, small-scale economic development, environment, etc. The French remained adamant that the organization couldn't discuss any political issues because they didn't want their territories having a voice in political matters. Basically, the metropolitan powers together with Australia and New Zealand paid the bill, and the islands decided on the programs within the budget. Eventually, the independent islands, along with Australia and New Zealand, formed another organization to deal with political as well as economic issues called the South Pacific Forum. The French are willing to pay a lot of money to keep the South Pacific Community headquarters in Noumea and are building a new headquarters for the organization. So between 1978 and 1982 I went to Noumea at least twice a year, first as a member of the U.S. delegation and later, when I was ambassador to Fiji, as head of the delegation.

Q: While we're still on this, what about the role of Australia and then New Zealand in this equation, during the time you were dealing with this?

Library of Congress

BODDE: The South Pacific is their backyard or even, front yard and they take a close interest in what is happening there. One of the things I remember was when I got the assignment I had a talk with somebody in the embassy in Bonn. He told me that it was important to remember that in that part of the world, Australia is the big guy. Well, that's certainly true. The Australians and the New Zealanders are the major aid donors to the islands so they're major players. I had more problems with the New Zealanders than with the Australians. The reason for that is that New Zealand is a small country. It's a tiny country, basically, but here's a place where they're important and along comes the United States. To them the U.S. is a bull in a china shop, and they weren't particularly happy that we were becoming more active in the region. They would like us to give money to the region but they don't like us down there competing with them. So there was a certain amount of tension with the New Zealand bureaucrats. I mean, the New Zealand people obviously don't have such negative feelings about the United States. Some of the New Zealand government officials are like the Canadians in that sense. The Canadian officials vis-à-vis the U.S. They both resent the U.S. being so big, rich and powerful.

Q: But also, if I recall, correct me if I'm wrong, there is quite a strong British Labor Party influence on people in New Zealand, which is left-wing and essentially kind of theoretically hostile to American capitalism.

BODDE: Well, I think there had been the labor mentality of post-war England. Ironically it was a class-conscious party in a classless society. Later the Labor Party was out of power for a long time and in the 1990s New Zealand embraced the free market system with a vengeance. Actually, the Conservatives were in power when I was working with the Pacific islands and Muldoon was the prime minister. But anti-Americanism was not based on ideology. The officials during the Conservative government resented the enhanced U.S. presence in the South Pacific as much as the Labor Party. The Labor Party was responsible for banning U.S. nuclear ships from New Zealand, a move popular with the

Library of Congress

public, which led to cool relations with the U.S. and the break up of the ANZUS (Australia-New Zealand-U.S.) alliance.

What I resented was that they thought they were the only people who understood the Pacific islanders. In reality they often didn't know what the islanders were thinking any more than we did. That said, to be a South Pacific expert in the New Zealand foreign service or the Australian foreign service was a good career move and many of their best people were involved with the islands.

I really came across a turf problem with the Australians and New Zealanders when I was director of Pacific island affairs. At the time, the U.S. decided to settle the long-standing issue of disputed claims to 25 islands in the South Pacific. The disputes had originally been between the U.S. and the UK, but sovereignty over some of the British colonies such as the Cook Islands and Tokelau eventually devolved to New Zealand and others such as Kiribati and Tuvalu were about to become independent. It would have been a political embarrassment for the U.S. to have a dispute over sovereignty with tiny, independent island nations. Our claims were primarily based on the Guano Mining Act of 1856. Guano is bird -

Q: Birdshit.

BODDE: Yes, which is a natural phosphate and, until they found artificial phosphates, was the major source of fertilizers in the world. So back in the 1850s and '60s it became very desirable for countries to discover guano islands and mine them. For example, Nauru was an Australian-controlled island rich in guano. For some years after Nauru became independent it was per capita the richest country in the world because of guano exports. Unfortunately, they squandered the money and now that the guano has run out, Nauru is just another poor South Pacific country. Anyhow, there were 25 islands in dispute. The largest number were in Kiribati, which before independence was called the Gilbert Islands. The Kiribati claims included Canton Island where we had a U.S. Air Force missile tracking

Library of Congress

station and Christmas Islands where we and the British had tested nuclear bombs. Others were in Tuvalu, formerly the Ellis Islands. Still others were in the Cook Islands and some others were in Tokelau. The Cook Islands were in free association with New Zealand, and the Tokelau Islands were a New Zealand territory. With independence of Kiribati and Tuvalu just around the corner, the U.S. decided to give up our claims provided U.S. strategic and fishing interests could be satisfied. One of the reasons the list was so long is that it was part of the Lend-Lease negotiations with the British before WWII involving the destroyers we leased to them.

Q: Yes, 15 destroyers and all that.

BODDE: Yes, before we entered the war, I guess in 1940, we were negotiating Lend Lease with the UK and the dispute over these islands came into it. I saw a State Department memo, which I should have copied because, given the lackadaisical record keeping system of the State Department, it may no longer exist. The memo had a notation from President Roosevelt instructing the State Department to include any islands where we had the slightest claim to use them as bargaining chips. In the case of some of the islands, the U.S. position was strong but others were dubious. We had a strong claim to Canton Island and for years we had a base on Canton. We had worked out an arrangement with the British in which both sides agreed that the dispute wasn't settled but that in good faith the U.S. would pay rent, which they in turn gave to the local Gilbert Islands government. First we used Canton Island as a refueling place for the old flying clippers, and then we used it to track satellites and missiles. We pulled out of that base on Canton Island when Kiribati became independent. Christmas Island was another strong claim with the UK and we used it for testing nuclear weapons.

As I said there were a couple of islands where our claims were strong because we had what the lawyers call "perfected" the claim by doing things there. In other cases it was doubtful whether we ever mined guano on them or who was the first to do so or even cases where there were inhabitants on them when they were "discovered". The first memo

Library of Congress

that was circulated in the interagency process proposed that the U.S. keep Canton and Christmas islands and we would give up our claims to the others in Kiribati and Tuvalu. Just when I took over as director, the British Embassy came back to us with a rejection of our proposal. They maintained that it was unacceptable for them to relinquish claims to islands that were going to be a part of a newly independent country.

I went back to the other agencies and worked out a new proposal. We finally reached consensus on a new proposal. This was a minor miracle because inter-agency negotiations can be even more acrimonious and duplicitous than international negotiations. For example, one time when I led the delegation to Hawaii for negotiations with Tuvalu I met with our delegation in the morning before a 10 o'clock negotiating session with Tuvalu's prime minister. The Defense Department representative opened my meeting with the statement that he had gotten a message during the night informing him that DOD no longer supported the previously agreed U.S. position. Christ, I'm going in there in an hour and he is telling me that crap. I avoided commitments to the Prime Minister and went back to Washington to get the Defense Department on board.

Anyhow, the interested agencies finally agreed that I could negotiate treaties with Tuvalu, Kiribati, The Cook Islands, and New Zealand (for the Tokelau). The treaties would include provisions that in a case of a crisis the island nations would favorably consider the reentry of the U.S. military forces. There were people in Washington who seemed to believe that Japan someday would try to re-conquer the islands. Anyhow we needed such language to satisfy the conservatives in Congress. Our renunciation of our claims was forever but the other provisions were subject to renegotiations after ten years if either side requested. To my knowledge they have never been renegotiated.

Q: Keep the Japanese out for at least that long.

BODDE: Right. The other provision we needed was more important. We needed a commitment from the islands that they wouldn't discriminate against U.S. fishing boats.

Library of Congress

This was a sensitive issue because the U.S. tuna fleet had moved to the Western Pacific because of the problems they had in Latin American waters. The American tuna boats didn't want the Pacific island countries to pass laws banning purse seining, which in effect would have banned most of the American boats. The U.S. eventually solved the fishing problem by signing an agreement with the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Organization. Under the agreement the United States pays about \$8 million a year, which is divided up among all the Pacific islands, including the Micronesians, depending on the size of the catch in those islands. This allows our ships to go into the 200-mile economic zones of the member nations.

I found the disputed island negotiations to be very educational. I learned how politically powerful the U.S. tuna industry was. If we did not have them on board, the U.S. Senate would never ratify the treaties. Even after the tuna fishermen's main protector, Senator Magnuson, died the tuna industry still was very powerful. I kept representatives of the industry informed each step of the way and they knew I had their interest at heart. If we didn't have some sort of security language in the treaties the conservative senators would have stopped ratification. The negotiations taught me a lot about how to deal with Congress.

I also learned that the Constitution notwithstanding, the U.S. state governments and other people who have legitimate interests should be included in the process. We may have a federal system and the Constitution empowers the federal government to be solely responsible for foreign relations. However, when you're dealing with Pacific islands it is a good idea to consult with the political leaders in Hawaii and American Samoa. After the first set of negotiations with Tuvalu I stopped by to brief the governor of Hawaii on what had transpired. I did so simply as a courtesy and I thought I was being really magnanimous to do so. I walked into the room, and there were at least 25 people in the room. In addition to the governor there were the key U.S. Senate and House staff members from the Hawaiian delegations in Congress and other Hawaiian state officials. Governor Ariyoshi really chewed me out. He asked how I could dare negotiate away

Library of Congress

American territory that belonged to Hawaii without consulting with Hawaii beforehand? He said this was typical East Coast arrogance - the Western states and Hawaii don't know anything and anyhow they don't count anyhow. Well, I walked out of that meeting saying to myself, "That was really smart, Bodde. Here you are a mid-grade bureaucrat and you are fighting with a Democratic governor in a Democratic Administration." You could be sure who was going to win that fight. I called my friend, George Chaplin, who was the chief editor of the Honolulu Advertiser and also the appointed U.S. representative to the South Pacific Commission. George was very well plugged in and a wonderful guy. He said Bill, you've got a problem and I suggest you do some political fence-mending. I spent the next couple of years cultivating the Hawaiians. It was well worth the effort.

Q: When you say "fence-mending," what did you do?

BODDE: I put a Hawaiian representative and an American Samoan representative on my delegation. I never went through Hawaii without stopping by and seeing the governor and keeping him in the loop. I worked closely with Hideto Kono, who the governor has appointed to monitor the negotiations. I knew Hawaiians were interested in Canton Island for a fishing station and transshipment installation. I also knew that it cost the U.S. Defense Department \$15 million a year to maintain an installation on Canton Island and that Hawaii wasn't going to spend \$15 million a year on such an installation. Their eyes were bigger than their stomachs or at least bigger than their ability to pay. I arranged for the military in Hawaii to fly down a Hawaiian delegation to look at Canton. The delegation came to the same conclusion. That is, unless the federal government was going to underwrite a fishing station and transshipment installation on Canton. Hawaii could not afford to underwrite the project. The same was true for American Samoa. We put some language in the treaties about fostering closer economic relations between Samoa and these islands. So essentially I did a whole series of things, all of which should have been done in the first place. It makes sense to consult with people and institutions outside the federal government who have a legitimate interest. Later my office proposed to the White House staff that they appoint Governor Ariyoshi to represent President Carter at

Library of Congress

the Kiribati independence ceremonies and they did. In any event, my fence-mending paid off. Later when I was ambassador to Fiji the Hawaiian state legislature passed a joint resolution commending me for my work in the Pacific islands. I made a lot of friends in the process.

We negotiated the first agreement with Tuvalu, and then with Kiribati. The Kiribati tale is sad. Kiribati is like most Pacific island countries that are overpopulated and to make matters worse often suffer from severe lack of rain. When the U.S. left Canton Island, we left millions of dollars of facilities or equipment that could not be moved or were uneconomic to move, including a desalination plant. I was authorized to give equipment left behind to Kiribati as part of the negotiations. But the U.S. Senate took four years to ratify the treaty. The equipment and installations were not maintained during this period. During this period the islands were under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior who made American Samoa responsible for Canton Island. The governor sent over a few men to “protect American interests.” It was really something out of a Peter Sellers movie. The British sent an Englishman with some people from Kiribati “to protect UK/Kiribati interests.” Relations between the two groups were poor. Both sides insisted on driving on “their” side of the road. It was just lucky that there were no head-on collisions. The tragedy was that millions of dollars worth of equipment that might have been used by Kiribati to resettle people went to waste.

We got the treaties negotiated. We got them signed. I signed the treaties with Kiribati and Tuvalu, and our ambassador in New Zealand, who was responsible for the Cooks and for Tokelau Islands, signed those treaties. Then they sent up on the Hill, and ran into a problem with Jesse Helms and some of his ideological soul mates. The Senate became Republican but fortunately Helms did not become chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Q: He went to the Agricultural Committee.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Fortunately, Helms chose to be chairman of the Agriculture Committee and Senator Lugar became chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. After the Reagan Administration reviewed the treaties, it decided to go ahead with ratification even though they had been negotiated in the Carter Administration. Later the political-appointee ambassadors in Fiji, New Zealand and Australia came in with telegrams saying this is important to our relations in the region to get the treaties ratified as soon as possible. The Australian and New Zealand Ambassadors also lobbied for ratification. I am convinced that had the Democrats still controlled the Senate, the treaties would not have been ratified. The Reagan Administration endorsement undercut the opposition from Helms and other conservatives. As it was, the Democrats supported the treaties to be nice to the islanders and the Republicans supported them because good relations with the island states enhanced U.S. national security. Senator Frank Murkowski of Alaska was floor leader for the treaties, which finally passed 92 to 4. Helms and his friends had held them up for four years.

Well, I started telling you this because you asked me about working with Australia and New Zealand. Dealing with the Australians and the New Zealanders on these treaties was an eye-opener. The New Zealanders were particularly difficult. Part of the problem stemmed from not consulting with the New Zealanders or Australians before we began negotiating with Tuvalu and Kiribati. But that was just part of the problem. The two ambassadors demanded to see Holbrooke and we set a lunch for them with Holbrooke, my boss Deputy Assistant Secretary Evelyn Colbert, and me. The ambassadors objected to the security language in the treaties and accused us of militarizing the islands. According to them we were introducing the Cold War into an area that previously had been free of Cold War tensions. Holbrooke, in his typical political manner - and I have great respect for his intelligence and political skills, turned to me and said, "Bill, they are right. Take care of it." He then left the lunch. Well, no matter what Holbrooke said, we were not able to change the security provisions, which were very mild in any event. At least not if

Library of Congress

we ever wanted to get the treaties ratified. We worked on the Australians and after a while they came around, and we finally convinced the New Zealanders. But it was not easy.

Q: All right. You are getting ready for this delegation. You've mentioned you had your Samoan and your Hawaiian and all of that.

BODDE: Well, as I said, the first negotiating meeting was in Hawaii with Tuvalu. Then we met with the UK and Kiribati leaders in Hawaii. The night before the Kiribati negotiations we had an informal meeting to brief Coleman, the governor of American Samoa. He had had a few drinks and was belligerent. Over time I got to know Peter well and we became good friends. He was normally not a belligerent person, but that night he was and he went after me about giving away American territory. Not one grain of American sand was going to be given away as long as he was governor and that sort of nonsense.

We realized that we couldn't go in with the U.S. position that we had originally told the British we were going to go in with. We would have to work out this problem with the American Samoans.

So Buzz Busby, the fisheries expert from the State Department who later was U.S. Ambassador to Columbia and I had breakfast with the head of the British delegation from the Foreign Office and someone from their UK Embassy in Washington. We had told them that we were going to do A, B, and C, and now we are going to go into the meeting and do X, Y, and Z. I'll never forget, because the name of the head of the British delegation - it couldn't have been any more perfect - was John Snodgrass. He was a very fine fellow and very understanding. They said, "Okay. We had hoped to wrap up the negotiations at this session but we see that you have a problem." I explained that we could go over general principles we would like to see in the treaties at this meeting and then I would go back and work out our differences with American Samoa but please be patient. He explained that he to was under pressure from his boss. The British foreign minister kept him sending

Library of Congress

messages, "Get this settled before Kiribati becomes independent." Well, that wasn't going to happen.

With considerable effort we finally got Hawaii and American Samoa on board. I went to Tuvalu and concluded the negotiations after independence. We had a joint meeting with Kiribati and the UK in Fiji before independence where we worked out the agreement but I did not sign the treaty with Kiribati until after independence. That left negotiations with New Zealand, The Cook Islands and Tokelau still to do.

When I went down to Wellington to negotiate with the New Zealand foreign ministry. Herb Hansell who was State Department legal advisor wouldn't let me take a lawyer. He objected to Department lawyers traveling too much. So there I was, negotiating a treaty in the New Zealand Foreign Office without a Department lawyer on the delegation. Fortunately, Dick Dols, the political counselor at the U.S. Embassy, had a law degree. Of course, I would not be authorized to sign any document until it was cleared with the lawyers in the Department. In reality these treaties were not complex legal documents but expressions of general political intent. You don't have to be a legal wizard to write them and, of course, I vetted them back in the Department. For their part, the New Zealanders presumed they knew everything about the islands and what the islanders think so they found no need to have any islanders on their delegations. I really enjoyed tweaking them. I always had an American Samoan on my delegation. When we sat down I would ask the New Zealand head of delegation, "Is there anybody here from the Cooks? Is there anybody here from the Tokelau?" He would reply, "No we will take care of their interests. After we met in Wellington, two New Zealand diplomats and I went over to the Cook Islands to see if there was enough common ground with the Cook Island Government to bring out a U.S. team to the Cook Islands to negotiate. Well, the Cook Islands' relationship to New Zealand is a lot like the Micronesians' relationship with us. It's a kind of love-hate relationship. The Cook Islands get a tremendous amount of money from New Zealand, but they resent it. No one likes being the supplicant. In the company of the New Zealanders the Cook Island officials told me that they saw no need to negotiate a treaty about their

Library of Congress

sovereignty over their islands. I was disappointed, but as I was boarding the plane their foreign secretary came rushing up to tell me that they were ready to start negotiations in two weeks. I called Washington when I got to Tahiti where I was attending a South Pacific Conference and asked the delegation to meet me one week later in Tahiti and we would go together to the Cook Islands.

The delegation included Buzz Busby, who was head of the fisheries office then, a lawyer, Dave Colson, one of the few people in the world who's been a Marine and a Peace Corps volunteer, and a representative from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Richie Shamora. Brownie Tuiasosopo represented America Samoa and Dick Dols and his secretary came over from our embassy in Wellington and rounded out the delegation. We got off to a rocky start because of tensions between New Zealand and the Cook Islands. At the first meeting the New Zealanders, on behalf of the Cook Islanders, put forward their position. We came back after lunch and were told by the Cook Islanders that we should disregard what we heard in the morning because New Zealand did not speak for them and they would speak for themselves. Before we sent the treaty to the Senate for ratification we insisted on a diplomatic note from New Zealand stating that under their free association agreement the Cook Islands had the legal authority to negotiate and sign a treaty with the U.S.

We reached agreement within a few days. I remember working on the final text with the U.S. delegation at a snack bar during a recess in the negotiations and Colson admonishing us not to get catsup on the treaty! Not quite the Congress of Vienna but it got the job done. For some reasons the New Zealanders were smarting from the experience.

A couple of months later there was an ANZUS meeting in Washington. ANZUS was the Australia, New Zealand, and U.S. mutual defense treaty. Later New Zealand dropped out because they wouldn't accept U.S. ships that had nuclear weapons on them in New Zealand waters. For some time after they left ANZUS, U.S.-New Zealand relations were quite cool. Anyhow, at the ANZUS meeting in Washington, the New Zealand foreign

Library of Congress

minister complained to Secretary of State Vance that Bodde and his delegation had gone to the Cook Islands and poisoned the well, turning the Cook Islanders against New Zealand. So suddenly I was summoned along with my boss, Evelyn Colbert, Busby, and Colson to the Secretary's office. That was the only time I had ever talked to Secretary Vance. He was eating a sandwich between meetings. "What is this all about?" So we explained to him what we had negotiated and said we were not trying to damage their relationship in any way. It was clear he wasn't even aware of the treaties and taken aback when the Kiwis complained to him. He listened to our explanation and said, "Okay, I'll speak to them." That was the end of it. Holbrooke supported me as well and I must say that Holbrooke was wonderfully supportive of my work.

Holbrooke did something as assistant secretary that no other assistant secretary did. Once a month he would invite a congressman or a senator over to his office for coffee and donuts with his deputies. Then he would bring them into the weekly bureau staff meeting. There the congressmen would get a chance to give a little speech about their view of the world or whatever. Then Holbrooke would conduct a regular staff meeting. This being the East Asia Bureau, he would usually ask the country director for China to say a few words. Then he'd might cover China-Taiwan or Japan or Southeast Asia. Almost every time he would ask me to tell the meeting what was happening in the islands. Well, my colleagues from much more important places would groan. I remember once after a meeting, the country director for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos grabbed me and complained, "God damn it, Bodde, I have a war going on, and we're spending our time in these meetings talking about Tuvalu! What's going on here?" I replied, "Look, what am I supposed to do? The assistant secretary asks, 'Bill, what's going on in the islands?' What should I say, 'Dick, you don't want to talk about that.' Don't you want to talk about some place more important?"

He really knew how to work the Hill. He got Glenn out there and we could always depend upon Glenn to give us support. The senators and congressmen loved attending the meetings. They felt they were learning the secrets of the temple. Most of all they thought

Library of Congress

their ideas were being taken seriously by the State Department. One of the great ironies of Washington political life is that we think the Department is weak and that Congress is omnipotent. In contrast the Hill thinks that the Department is powerful and out of control. To my knowledge, no other assistant secretary in any administration has done such a thing.

Q: Well, this was Holbrooke's thing. I mean, people laughed at him, but he always knew where the power was. I'm told even as a very young officer he would play tennis with the wives of the high and mighty or something to this effect. He's used them well. I mean he's done well for him, but for the country he's been used well.

BODDE: Right. He really was a great asset for a new office that had little standing in the Department. For example, the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) wanted to pull their man out of Fiji. For some reason, the director of USIA, a Foreign Service Officer on loan from the State Department, didn't want to use their officers as regional public affairs officers. We told Holbrooke and he went with the DAS Evelyn Colbert and me to see the USIA director. Getting Holbrooke to take time out of his tremendously busy schedule and to raise it with the USIA director was a testimony to the interest that he took in the Pacific islands. At the meeting he argued that there were only two areas where the Administration could really carve out new foreign policy initiatives. One was China and the other was the Pacific islands. As usual, he was successful and we kept the USIA position in Suva. No other East Asia and Pacific assistant secretary would have done that for the Pacific islands office. After I was director for about a year, he said, "Bill, I'm going to try to have you appointed Ambassador to Fiji when John Condon's time is up; I'm not sure I can pull it off, but I'm going to try."

Q: Normally these things were sort of considered political payoffs to minor-

BODDE: Not yet. Later this was the case, but back then we had career Foreign Service Officers as ambassadors in Fiji and Papua New Guinea. John Condon was the first

Library of Congress

resident U.S. ambassador in Fiji. Before that, the ambassador in Wellington, usually a political appointment, was also accredited to Fiji, Tonga, and Western Samoa.

Q: Career people?

BODDE: Holbrooke had to fight for my appointment. He went to see the Director General, Harry Barnes, and Deputy Secretary Christopher to propose my name. They told him no, they had their own candidate. He refused to give in and told them that Bodde has done a fantastic job and deserves it. He threatened to go to Secretary Vance. They backed off, so I am everlastingly grateful to Dick Holbrooke. It's funny, the other day, I was talking to Avis Bohlen, who was our ambassador in Bulgaria. She had been a DAS in EUR in the 1990s when Dick was Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and he did the same thing for her

Working on the islands in the Department was fun for my wife, too. Unlike the wives of most country directors in Washington, my wife got very involved in my work. For example, each year there is a Congressional National Prayer Breakfast in Washington. Because of the missionaries' influence in the South Pacific, the islanders tend to be religious and two or three of the island leaders would attend. Well, when they came, they'd get Secret Service protection as heads of state. They didn't have an embassy in Washington and there was no one to take care of them while they were here. We ended up hosting "state dinners" at our little house in Bethesda. Our neighbors were really impressed when the Secret Service would come and check out our modest neighborhood. I would warn our teenage son "If you get caught smoking pot, I'll kill you." Pacific islanders are very family oriented, so they were pleased that we had them to our home and that my wife did all the cooking. It helped cement personal relations with these leaders and that was very useful when I went out to the region as ambassador. Anyhow, how often do you get a chance to give a state dinner at home? The kids would pass the peanuts and Ingrid and I would serve.

Library of Congress

The treaties with Kiribati and Tuvalu were each in two languages but it was agreed that English was the controlling language. That meant that if there were ever any argument, it was the English text that mattered. That can be important. I remember in Germany that after the Quadripartite Agreement was signed, there were arguments about what the German meant in English. By having English as the controlling language we avoided that problem, but still, we couldn't sign a treaty without having some idea of what it said in the other language. Suppose it said something like: "This is a terrible treaty that we have been forced to agree to under duress." We had to find someone to translate the I-Kiribati language. So the question was, where do you find somebody who speaks I-Kiribati in Washington? We found an anthropologist at the University of Maryland who had done his field work in the Gilbert and Ellis Islands, and he could read the text enough to see that there was nothing untoward in the text. We didn't need a formal, certified translation of it since it states in the treaties that English was the controlling language.

The negotiations with the islanders were not confrontational at all. When we were concluding the negotiations in Tuvalu, I thought we had run into a problem. Tuvalu's attorney general was a Brit. Although they were independent, they had a lawyer from the British Government seconded to Tuvalu as attorney general. After he reviewed the text, he and I went before the prime minister and the cabinet and he explained the language to them, sentence by sentence. I stressed that there was no foreign aid component in the treaty and they should not expect any. The attorney general finished going through the text and one cabinet member, an old man, put his hand up and said, "I think we need one more clause in the treaty." I thought, oh, my God, he is sure to suggest a killer amendment calling for U.S. aid. Whatever it was going to be, I was sure it would cost us money and we couldn't agree to it. Anyhow, the old man says, "The treaty we are agreeing to is a treaty of friendship therefore it should have a clause in it that states 'friendship is forever'." And you know, I was practically getting teary-eyed at that. The attorney general said "Oh, I don't think we have to put that in there." Although all the disputed islands treaties could be

Library of Congress

renegotiated after ten years if either side requested, the United States gave up all claims to the islands forever.

It was a wonderful experience. At the same time, I was doing the Micronesian negotiations. One of the things that struck me was that the fully independent South Pacific islanders had much less of a chip on their shoulders than the Micronesians. They didn't have a hell of a lot of material wealth but their indigenous cultures were more intact and they were more self secure. Tuvalu was a country of 8,000 people. I think now it has 10,000. And one can argue that maybe a place that small should not be considered a country, but that is the way the world is now. Tuvalu as a sovereign nation joined the United Nations in 2000. They helped finance their membership by selling their international designation "TV" to a dot com entrepreneur who paid them 4 million dollars per year for 10 years for the right to market domain names under dot.tv rather than dot.com.

When I negotiated the treaty Tuvalu only had a few cars in the capital, Funafuti. Mostly people got around by foot or bicycle. The UK gave the government a London taxi-type vehicle to use as the official vehicle of the prime minister. Except for the cars and electricity in some buildings and a handful of telephones, Funafuti looked about the same as it did 50 years ago. In fact, I used to say, especially in the early days when I'd go to Tuvalu, that I felt as if I had wandered onto the set of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. I'd get out of the airplane, and there'd be dancing girls. Now, dancing girls in Tuvalu usually tend to be all ages and about four feet tall and four feet wide. Although they are Polynesians, they are by our standards as attractive as the French Polynesians who, with that mixture of Caucasian, Asian, and Pacific islander blood are unbelievably beautiful. But different cultures have different concepts of beauty and I was flattered by my welcome. They "danced" sitting down, because years ago the Protestant missionaries forbade them to dance in a sinful manner. They sat down and swayed back and forth and sang. When I was there later with Ingrid to present my credentials, she told me that some of the melodies were from old German hymns the missionaries had taught them.

Library of Congress

There would always be a feast in honor of my visit. Fortunately, as the guest of honor there was a pole to lean back against, as you sat cross-legged on mats for hours. Ingrid was not so lucky. I couldn't do it now. They'd bring out a huge banana leaf with a whole chicken, a whole fish, and various root crops. At first I was worried that I could not eat it all. However, I learned that you weren't supposed to eat it all because once you finished the banana leaf was passed back to the women and children sitting behind the men. If you eat everything they would not have gotten anything to eat. Then there would be hours of singing and dancing. Time doesn't mean anything in the islands. At first the singing and dancing is really intriguing, but after a while it loses some of its charm. Still, it was a wonderful and unique experience.

Q: Oh, I know.

BODDE: It was like going to Africa in the old days without all the shortcomings of Africa. And the Pacific islanders were very personable.

Q: They're nice people.

BODDE: They're very nice people. We returned to the South Pacific on a Millennium Cruise last January. Ingrid and I lectured on a cruise that included Tahiti, The Cook Islands, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, and New Zealand. It was unbelievable. The cheapest cabin was \$60,000 for two and no discount for children. It was our first time back to the South Pacific in 20 years. We saw some old friends and in general we found the islanders as friendly now as they were two decades ago. They remain very positive about the U.S.

I spent three years in the Department working on Pacific islands affairs - as deputy director in the office for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific islands and then two years as director of the office of Pacific islands affairs. The Department has since combined the offices again to save money, which is unfortunate. In 1980 I was appointed ambassador to Fiji, Tuvalu, and Tonga, and envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Kiribati.

Library of Congress

I couldn't be appointed ambassador to Kiribati because at that time they did not accredit an ambassador to the United States. Senator Claiborne Pell, who was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was convinced that the U.S. should not appoint an ambassador to a country that did not appoint an ambassador to the U.S. So I was named envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, which is a title we hardly use anymore. After WWII we used the title in Hungary and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

Q: Well, we had one for a long time in Switzerland. We used to have them all over until Roosevelt in the '30s raised all the ministers in South America up to be ambassadors, part of our Good Neighbor Policy, and the barn door was wide open after that.

BODDE: Well, I was envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Kiribati. I thought it was a neat title. Later Kiribati did accredit an ambassador to the U.S. and we upgraded ours to ambassador, but I had left Fiji by then. When I was still country director I came up with a solution to the accreditation problem that helped a number of the small countries. I remember having read somewhere that the Brits had an ambassador to some African country who was resident in London. He was the desk officer and they made him ambassador as well. Later the U.S. did something similar with Dick Williams who served as country director for China and concurrently was ambassador to Mongolia but resident in Washington. After Dick our ambassadors resided in Ulan Bator. The small Pacific island nations did not have the trained personnel or the money to send many ambassadors to live abroad so I suggested they use the British approach. Some of them liked the idea and appointed their number two man in the foreign ministry as ambassadors to many countries but they resided at home. The ambassador would make a trip to the capitals once or twice a year. It was a practical solution.

Q: Well, you were ambassador, what, from 1980 to when?

BODDE: From 1980 to '82.

Library of Congress

Q: Where did you live?

BODDE: We lived in Suva, Fiji. Fiji with 700,000 inhabitants was the largest Pacific island country, in terms of population, after Papua New Guinea. We had an ambassador in Papua New Guinea, which has over four million people. The rest of the island nations are very much smaller, including Fiji, which in my day had about 700,000. Fiji was the most developed of the Pacific islands. When the British came to Fiji, they recognized the hierarchical chiefly system. It did look something like the British nobility system. So they actually sent a few of the children of the chiefs or the paramount chiefs to Cambridge and Oxford and trained them. The Fijians had that advantage of being taken seriously by the British, and having their elite trained.

In the 19th century the British realized that they would have to import labor because the Fijians didn't take well to the grueling work of picking cotton or harvesting sugar. At first they tried to man the plantations by using semi-slave ships called "blackbirds" that would go out and press-gang natives from Melanesia to work in Fiji. That didn't work well so the British imported Indians as indentured servants to work in the sugar fields. The Indians would sign up for so many years and after the contract was completed the laborer was free to return to India. Many brought their wives with them to Fiji and when their time was up most of them stayed in Fiji rather than returning to India. They also tended to have lots of children, and the Indian population grew larger and larger until it was almost as large as the Fijian population. So when Fiji was about to become independent in 1970, the British attempted to remedy the situation by drafting a constitution that essentially made it impossible for Fijians to alienate their land. That is, 90 per cent of the land belongs to Fijian tribes. It can't be sold or even given away. Only 10 per cent of the land is available for private ownership.

This meant that Indians who wanted to stay and grow sugar had to lease the land from the Fijian tribes. The original leases were for 99 years and many are coming up for renewal now in the year 2000. Now most of the Indians stayed in agriculture as the equivalent

Library of Congress

to sharecroppers. Another sizable group went into business, both manufacturing and retail. And a minority went into the professions, so that now in Fiji almost all lawyers, doctors, and dentists are Indians. Most stores are Indian-owned except for a couple of big Australian and New Zealand firms and banks. The result is that the Fijians control the land and the Indo-Fijians control much of the wealth.

In Fiji the Indian Diaspora did not integrate with the local society at all. The Indo-Fijians live mostly in Indian villages or in cities in neighborhoods separate from the Fijians. They maintain their culture and language. There is practically no intermarriage between Indo-Fijians and Fijians. There is coexistence but no real integration.

This split between the two groups has made for great tensions. In 1987 two successive coups, led by a Fijian Army officer, Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka, overthrew the elected governments on the grounds that they were neglecting the needs of the indigenous Fijians and favoring the Indo-Fijians. In 1998 Rabuka, who had become the head of government, agreed to a democratic constitution. He lost the next election to an Indo-Fijian labor leader, Mahendra Chaudhry and stepped down. Within a year there was another coup, this time led by a civilian but with elements of the Fijian Army participating. George Speight, the coup leader, was a Fijian businessman of dubious reputation. He had only recently returned from Australia where he had "permanent resident status." Speight is very articulate in English but reportedly speaks Fijian poorly. He and his armed supporters took the prime minister and the cabinet prisoners. He forced the long-time leader of Fiji, President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, to resign and negotiated the formation of a new government. However Speight eventually overplayed his hand and the Fijian Army attacked his headquarters and put Speight and other rebel leaders under arrest. They did not restore the Chaudhry government to power and have appointed an interim government dominated by Fijians. A new constitution is being drafted that allegedly will better protect the rights of indigenous Fijians.

Library of Congress

The economy is in shambles and as of August 2000 Fiji's future is unclear. While the ethnic split has historically created serious tensions, it has been the Indians who have been responsible for Fiji's economic success. The Indians contributed drive, ambition and entrepreneurial skills to the country. They forced the Fijians to compete and become more entrepreneurial. A quota system was set up to ensure that Fijians got into the university and medical school and obtained employment in business and government. Nevertheless, many Fijians resented the wealth of the Indo-Fijians.

As I said earlier, the British did more to prepare Fiji for independence by educating Fijian leaders and building an institutional infrastructure. They did not do the same for their other former Pacific island colonies such as the Solomons, Tuvalu, or Kiribati. The father of independent Fiji, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, was sent first to medical school in New Zealand. However, the ranking high chief of Lau, Ratu Lala Sukuna, decided it was more important to train Ratu Mara to be the future leader of Fiji. He ordered him to leave medical studies and go to Oxford. After Oxford Mara felt he needed more political and economic training so he attended the London School of Economics. Ratu Mara once told me that the socialist economists at the London School of Economics have ruined more economies in the Third World than colonialism. I think that's true. But Mara, Oxford-educated, articulate became, really, one of the most important leaders in the Pacific region. Therefore, Fiji was a natural place to put a regional embassy.

Q: At the time, '80-82, when you were there, who was the. . . . I mean, what was the government, and how did you deal with it?

BODDE: It was a parliamentary democracy and, like many of the Pacific island nations, it was the Westminster system overlaid on a tribal-hereditary system. The Pacific islanders solved the conflict between tradition and democracy by electing their paramount chiefs as the presidents or prime ministers. It worked well up until a point. Sometimes, though, it made for difficulties. You would see this particularly in the case of Ratu Mara who was prime minister when I was there. Later I saw similar problems in the Marshall Islands

Library of Congress

where the president was also the paramount chief. A paramount chief is never challenged. What he says is law. A democratically elected leader is frequently challenged and must justify his actions. Sometimes the paramount chief / president had trouble accepting this. They often have trouble separating their role as paramount chief and their role as an elected leader. They did not really accept the concept of a loyal opposition. That's why I believe that after Mara lost the election in 1987, he remained passive when the coup took place. If Mara, given his chiefly status, had stood together with the governor general, also a Fijian chief, and said, "Back to the barracks," the troops would have gone back to the barracks. I believe to this day that he didn't do it because he was appalled that his subjects had voted him out of power - how could they do that to him? It was a conflict of ego and tradition versus democracy.

Fiji in my time had an active parliament and multi-racial society. I admired Ratu Mara for what he had done for Fiji in the first ten years of independence. However, I never established a close relationship with him. Interestingly enough, he and my successor Freddie Eckert, a political appointee with a remarkably undistinguished background, became close friends. Eckert left Fiji after two years and successfully ran for Congress. Defeated after one term, he used his connections with Ratu Mara to land a lucrative contract as a consultant to the Fiji Government. Then they had a falling-out and he sued the Fiji Government for breach of contract. Ratu Mara was ambivalent about the United States and was convinced that we never gave him the respect he deserved. When I was ambassador, his daughter Karla worked at the embassy. Twenty years later, she was minister for tourism and was taken hostage in the coup. If Mara ran hot and cold about the U.S., he had an even more ambivalent relationship with Australia and New Zealand. Those ambassadors would often be called into his office to be chewed out because their prime ministers were reported on the radio to have said something Mara didn't like. He was not a man that was at ease with himself despite his high rank but he was nevertheless an impressive man. A tall handsome man with regal bearing, he spoke the Queen's English and could be very eloquent. At the same time he was very insecure and always alert to

Library of Congress

real or intended slights. His wife, a high chief in her own right, was gracious and down to earth. Fijians are very simpatico people. They tend to be big and tall with erect posture. I used to get a crick in my neck from looking up to them. They wore their hair in what we used to call "an Afro" and sometimes they looked very fierce. But when you'd say hello to them, which is "bula, bula" they would give you a smile that would light up an auditorium and reply "bula, vinaka". They are also tremendously loyal. Our driver, Pania, considered us his family. I was his father, Ingrid was his mother, and our 16-year-old son, who was out there with us for a time, was his brother. I am convinced that even the specially trained bodyguards that I had in Frankfurt wouldn't have protected me better than Pania.

Despite Ratu Mara's moodiness, relations between the U.S. and Fiji were good. One day one of the government ministers came to see me and said that they were interested in discussing the use of Fijian troops in the U.S.-sponsored Sinai Multinational Force and Observers. I got in touch with Washington right away, and they quickly sent out a delegation to negotiate an agreement for Fiji's participation. Fijian troops had been part of the UN peacekeeping troops in Lebanon for some time and they had an excellent reputation. It is generally agreed that they are among the best of the UN peacekeepers. If you tell them not to let anyone pass, then nobody's coming through. Fifteen or twenty Fijian soldiers have been killed while on duty as peacekeepers. When a Fijian soldier is killed while serving as a peacekeeper he is given a hero's funeral when they bring the body home. It is part of their warrior tradition. Well, anyhow, this team came out to negotiate with a Foreign Service officer - Wat Cluverius

Q: Wat Cluverius, yes. I've interviewed him.

BODDE: He was the head of delegation, and he had two U.S. Army colonels, a DOD civilian and a State Department lawyer with him. When they arrived I explained how Fijians negotiate in contrast to negotiations in the Middle East. They had come to Fiji right from negotiating with the Egyptians and the Israelis, and that was an entirely different situation.

Library of Congress

Negotiating with the Fijians was not they say 20, and you respond with 10 and then settle at 15.

Q: Yes.

BODDE: If the Fijians propose a figure they do so because they believe it is a necessary and fair sum. What you have to do in response is to explain why their figure is too high and why it should be less. If your explanation makes sense they will accept it and agree to the lower figure. For example, the Fijians said, we require so much money to provide a compass for every soldier. We replied that in the U.S. Army we only issue a compass to squad leaders. The Fijians immediately reduced their request accordingly. Our delegation was very impressed with the quality of the Fijian military and their reasonableness in negotiating. In fact, the U.S. financial expert on the delegation was so favorably impressed that he voluntarily put in funds for a new mess hall in Suva although they had not requested it. He told me that he had never dealt with such reasonable people.

We had a party at the Fiji Veterans' Association Hall to celebrate the successful conclusion of the negotiations. One of the U.S. colonels, who was in charge of training at Fort Benning infantry school, approached me at the party. He said, "Mr. Ambassador when they sent me out here on the negotiating team I thought it was a joke. I thought these people still lived in the trees. I was really off base. Now I would like to take a squad of Fijian soldiers back to Benning to show them what real soldiers look like!" The Fijians were very proud of the role they had played in World War II fighting the Japanese and in fighting the communist guerrillas in Malaysia in the 1960s. A retired Gurkha general, who had commanded Gurkha troops alongside the Fijians in Malaysia, told me that the Fijians were the fiercest soldiers he had ever seen. In World War II the Fijians began as scouts for the U.S. forces on Guadalcanal and later had their own combat units. When I would visit a village out in the bush, the chief of the village and probably a Protestant clergyman and maybe the schoolteacher would meet us. Often there would be old World War II veterans in the welcoming party. They wore skirts, called a sulu in Fijian, and white shirts tattered

Library of Congress

from being laundered for years. On the chests they proudly wore their medals from World War II to show the visiting American ambassador. I would get choked up.

Q: *Oh, yes.*

BODDE: Interestingly enough, the Indians, taking a cue from Mahatma Gandhi, did not participate in the war. The Fijians went to fight together with us, and the Indians didn't. This also served to widen the split between the two ethnic groups in Fiji. Anyhow, emotions ran high at the celebration at the veterans hall. I think if I had announced America and Fiji were once again allies, fighting together in a just cause, they all would have signed up!

Fijian troops are still in the Sinai. In 1999 my wife and I were on a cruise that took us through the Suez Canal and we stopped in the Sinai. We passed the Multilateral Force and Observers headquarters in our tour bus. When I looked at that terrain and the climate, I thought, what did I do to these people? Can you imagine if you come from a lush, tropical island where fruit falls from the tree to go live in a barren desert? But they're still there. The Fiji government offered its services for the very practical reason that it is a good source of revenue for the government. The government pays the troops a small percentage of the income and the rest goes into the national treasury. Still, for the troops it's a lot of money. The Lebanon and Sinai peacekeeping detachments employ about a thousand soldiers. They rotate the troops between Lebanon and Sinai. When they approached us, Fiji was concerned because the UN wasn't paying on time and wanted to be sure that the U.S. would pay them on time.

An unintended consequence of engaging the Fiji Army in the Sinai was that we probably strengthened the military and enhanced the military's role in Fiji politics. Colonel Rabuka was a product of the enhancement of Fiji's military, which enabled him to garner support as a coup leader in 1987. The latest coup included elements of the military among the rebels as well, but it was the Fiji Army that eventually put down the coup. All in all, our use of Fiji soldiers in peacekeeping has been a plus.

Library of Congress

I was also accredited to other South Pacific counties. We lived in Suva but I also covered Tonga and Kiribati and Tuvalu. Tonga was something special, because Tonga has never been a colony. It has been a protectorate of the British, and the King is a descendant of the first king of Tonga. His mother, Queen Salote, received world attention when she was shown on television at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. At the coronation she insisted on riding in a open carriage through the rain because in Tonga you do not ride under cover when you pay your respects to a sovereign. Her son, Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, weighs about 350 pounds and is Tonga's first college-educated king. He had a fascination with Germany. Even when I was ambassador, he preferred to talk about things German. I would have to remind him that, after all, I was the American Ambassador and we should talk a little bit about American and Tonga relations. But he had this thing about Germany and he knew I had served in Bonn and Berlin. Sometime later, I was talking to the president of Germany, Richard Von Weizsaecker, and he told me that the king came to Berlin when he was governing mayor and the king knew more about the history of Berlin than he did. There are many wonderful stories about the king. He loves McDonald's hamburgers, the story goes. So one time he was visiting Los Angeles he had a motorcycle escort from the airport to his hotel. They were driving along, when he spots the golden arches.

Q: McDonald's, yes.

BODDE: Yes the golden arches of McDonalds. Anyhow, he taps the driver on the shoulder and points to McDonalds. The driver makes a sharp right turn but the convoy with sirens wailing goes on to the hotel. Of course, when they get there they realize they have lost the king so they frantically retrace their steps to find him munching a hamburger at McDonalds.

He also is very fond of Chinese food, and the Taiwanese used this to their political advantage. Some years ago the king was deciding whether Tonga should recognize Taiwan or the People's Republic. The Taiwanese promised him if he would recognize

Library of Congress

Taiwan, they would provide him with the biggest Chinese restaurant in the Pacific islands. He agreed to recognize Taiwan and some months later, the Taiwanese ambassador called on him. He told the king that the cooks, pots and pans and foodstuffs had arrived but they needed a building to set up the restaurant. Well, the king as monarch has a claim on all property in Tonga. He looked around and decided that the Mormon Church would make a good location. So out went the Mormons, and in went the Chinese restaurant. It was the strangest Chinese restaurant you ever wanted to see. The king, a Presbyterian, had nothing against the Mormons who are very strong in Tonga. A few years later he permitted the Mormons to build a temple in Tonga.

The king had a sense of British tradition. You presented credentials to him at the palace, gingerbread Victorian house, in morning dresstriped pants, top hat, etc. These I rented by mail from New Zealand, which meant the material was heavy, scratchy wool - just what you needed in one hundred degree heat. Ingrid joined me after the king and I read our respective messages. He sat on a specially constructed couch blocking the only fan in the room. A servant brought out two flutes of champagne and large silver beaker for His Royal Highness. Turned out that the queen was trying to keep him on a diet and it was filled with Tab.

The crown prince of Tonga was foreign minister. He was educated at Sandhurst, the British military school, and was at loose ends to keep himself intellectually occupied in Tonga. He would much rather talk about Soviet military strategy than about economic development in Tonga. He gave a reception for me after I presented my credentials and then the next night I gave a reception in his honor. The receptions were at the famous Chinese restaurant for there are not many venues for a large reception in the Tongan capital. Ingrid and I walked into the restaurant for the foreign minister's reception. You walked down a long hallway that once led to the altar, I guess. It was lined with Taiwanese flags. If there had been a photo of that in the newspaper, the People's Republic of China would have protested and Washington would have recalled me [laughter] in a New York minute. Fortunately there were no photographers around. I didn't want to embarrass the

Library of Congress

Tongans so I went ahead with the reception but I told the manager afterwards that I was giving a reception the next night and there would be no Taiwanese flags, no Tongan flags, no American flags, just a reception. That's how they did it. When we were back in Tonga 20 years later we went looking for the restaurant, but now it's a TV station or something. I think that at the present time Tonga recognizes the PRC (People's Republic of China). The Pacific mini states are more sophisticated now and they play the PRC and Taiwan off against each other. By switching their recognition every few years when the other country offers more aid, they make some money. They've learned to play that game.

Q: Did we have any. . . . I mean, with all three areas, did we have any major interests or particular interests that you had to watch?

BODDE: Well, we kept an eye on the Soviets and we did not want them to become active in the South Pacific. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan -

Q: Which was in '79, yes.

BODDE: - most Pacific island nations banned Soviet cruise ships, which were used by Australian tourists. The islanders were basically anti-Communist because their societies were very religious and conservative. My pitch to Washington was that there was a reservoir of good will towards the U.S. among the South Pacific islanders going back to World War II. We could preserve and even increase this reservoir by increasing our small aid package of five million dollars for the whole region and by paying a little more attention to them. They vote in the UN with us much more than most third world nations and even more than some of our allies such as France. For example, they voted with the U.S. to defeat the "Zionism is racism" resolution in the General Assembly. We don't have major interests out there, but with a little bit of effort, we could increase our influence. Holbrooke had the idea that we should train a small number of FSOs as Pacific islands specialists. We could send them to the University of Hawaii Pacific islands graduate program. They would, God forbid, not spend their whole career in the islands, but would do a tour after

Library of Congress

the training and then down the line would hopefully go back as ambassador. We did send two very good officers to Hawaii for the training. One of them went to Port Moresby after training. The other one came to Suva as my DCM and later was director of Pacific Island Affairs. He was supposed to go to the Federated States of Micronesia as ambassador but lost out at the last minute.

In the twenty years since I went out as ambassador to Fiji, the political and economic situation in many of the island states has deteriorated. They are plagued by coups and civil wars and they have not developed very much economically. Sadly, it is very hard to see a rosy economic future for most of these tiny islands. They are too small to have much of an economic base and they are geographically remote. They require two things to survive economically. One is foreign assistance from the former colonial powers and international organizations. The other is repatriation of money from their citizens working abroad. This is the case with the Filipinos who work all over the world and send money home. American Samoans do the same by serving in the U.S. armed forces and a few highly paid Samoans play football in the NFL (National Football League). Tuvalu and Kiribati both have schools to train merchant seamen to serve on foreign vessels. It used to be considered a bad thing to export your talent. We worried about the brain drain. Well, there are only so many trained people you can use in small countries like the Pacific island states, so if their citizens can go and work as programmers in Silicon Valley or such and send money home, that's an efficient use of their resources.

Q: Absolutely.

BODDE: I think that it's very hard to see any way they can provide a standard of living similar to Hawaii or Australia without a large amount of foreign assistance. You can't educate people and say, "Now go back to the outer islands as hunters and gatherers."

Q: Well, for a lot of them on some of these islands, they've lost their fishing skills and -

Library of Congress

BODDE: They don't have those skills any more, that's right. Ironically, the South Pacific islanders are better off than the former American territories because they were not so spoiled by the colonial powers. I remember once there was a change of government in Tuvalu and I asked their ambassador in Fiji would he be recalled and if so what would he do? He told me he would retire and go back to his home island. I asked him how he would support himself if he retired and received no government salary. He laughed and told me as long as the coconuts grew and there was fish in the ocean around his island he would do all right. Their standard of living may be lower but, in some cases, it is self-sustainable. But it was a great assignment. I later went back to it, so to speak, which we'll talk about the next time, about the Marshall Islands, but that was very different, of course.

Q: Well, why don't we stop at this point, Bill, and we'll put in this: we've really gone up to 1982. And this was all part of filling in this gap up to '87. So just put at the end, where did you go in '82?

BODDE: '82, I went to the East-West Center in Hawaii for a year. Then I went to Consulate General Frankfurt.

Q: Okay, we'll pick it up at that point. Great.

Today is the 10th of May, 2000. So in 1982 you were going where? You were going to what?

BODDE: I was in Fiji. Actually, I was bounced out of Fiji by a political appointee.

Q: And how did that work?

BODDE: Well, when I went out there we knew that there'd be an election, but I thought that even if Ronald Reagan were elected it was unlikely that a political appointee would want

Library of Congress

to go to Fiji. I was wrong. Presidents' Bush and Clinton let most career people finish out a three-year tour as ambassador but the Reagan Administration was not as generous. There was a conservative New York State legislator who had supported Reagan going back to the Republican convention when he lost to Gerald Ford. Anyhow, he wanted to come to Fiji. We always suspected that he thought Fiji was Tahiti, but that may be too unkind. I know one thing. When the U.S. asked for agreement, the Department sent out his resume. It was monumentally unimpressive. His name was Freddie Eckert, and he was a strange guy. He mistrusted anyone who worked for the government. I wrote him a letter about the staff and other details about the post that would be of interest to the new ambassador. My wife wrote to his wife about the residence and the household staff and neither of us received an answer. He got off on a wrong foot with Ratu Mara, the prime minister, but later, for some peculiar reason, they became bosom buddies. He left after two years to run for Congress. He successfully ran for the seat held for many years by Barber Conable, who left to become the president of the World Bank.

Q: This is in what state?

BODDE: Upstate New York, Buffalo, I believe. In any event, he managed to lose the seat after two years, and by chance I was at a dinner with Conable once. I asked him how safe the seat was for a Republican. He told me that it had been the safest seat in the United States Congress and that a Republican would have to work hard to lose that seat. But anyhow, Eckert was again appointed an ambassador; this time to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

Q: In Rome, yes, that was the one that. . . . yes.

BODDE: But Eckert kept trying to involve himself in U.S.-Fiji relations and the Department finally told him to butt out — that the U.S. had an ambassador in Fiji. In 1989 when I was DAS in EUR, I went to Rome with Secretary Shultz. We were there for the Easter services at St. Peter's. Mrs. Shultz was Catholic and she wanted to go to Easter mass in Saint

Library of Congress

Peters before Shultz resigned. It was a fantastic experience, just to see the Pope serve mass. We were probably 20 yards away from the altar. Just before the mass started who walked in but Ratu Mara with Freddie Eckert. Well, he got a contract from the Fijians after he resigned as ambassador to the UN agency. It was allegedly worth 300,000 dollars. I don't know what any American lobbyist could do for Fiji that was worth 300,000 dollars. Later they had a falling out, and there was a court case, and I think it's still in the court at this time. Anyhow that was my successor.

But we left Fiji, and we went to Hawaii for a year to the East-West Center. I became the first diplomat-in-residence at the East-West Center, which was very nice.

Q: Would you talk about that a bit?

BODDE: Yes, sure.

Q: Would you explain what the East-West Center was in those days - this is '82 to '83, I guess.

BODDE: Sure. The East-West Center goes back to the Lyndon Johnson Administration, when it was set up with federal money. It is still funded primarily by federal money, although the level of funding has been cut back severely and other countries do contribute. It was set up as part of the University of Hawaii. It later separated from the university, although it's on the university campus and some of its facilities were turned over to the university. It was established to encourage interchange between Asia and the United States. No doubt one of the reasons for setting it up was the propaganda value of showing a U.S. interest in Asia beyond the Vietnam War.

When Hawaii got caught up in the anti-Vietnam protests, so did the East-West Center. The people running it had difficulties with the faculty and students for some time. Some of these difficulties continued into the 1980s. There was a residue of 1960 hippie-type researchers who had tenure, so they could not get rid of them. These academicians were

Library of Congress

caught in the “old thinking.” Some of them even suspected that I was sent there to spy on them. I told them that Washington really didn't care enough about them to send anybody out to spy on them. In fact, the real challenge was to ensure that Washington continued to pay attention to the East-West Center and kept the funding coming. It was funded through USIA. U.S. Senator Dan Inouye, who has belatedly received the Congressional Medal of Honor, has been responsible for obtaining congressional funding over the years. He was a war hero in World War II and lost his arm while serving in the famous Nisei Regiment in Italy.

Q: Part of the 447th.

BODDE: Yes, right. The 447th has great political significance in Hawaii. From the time Hawaii became part of the U.S. until after World War II, Hawaii was primarily a Republican state run by the old missionary and settler families.

Q: They came to do good and they did well.

BODDE: Exactly. Many of them were very wealthy and influential. In fact they were behind the coup that overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy and brought Hawaii under the American flag. It was only after the war that the Japanese-Americans in Hawaii came into their own. The core of this new political force was the returning Japanese-American veterans allied with the trade unions in the Democratic Party.

Q: I had a member of that, Sunao Sakamoto, a Foreign Service Officer, with me in Korea.

BODDE: Well, you know, they were a remarkable fighting unit and they became very powerful politically. Inouye, particularly in all those years when the Democrats controlled the U.S. Senate, was particularly influential. In those days the East-West Center was going to be funded come hell or high water. In recent years, especially since the Republicans took over Congress, the Center has run into tougher times, much tougher times. There have been deep cuts in funding and personnel. It's an institution like the Foreign Service

Library of Congress

Institute that can't make up its mind what it is supposed to be. Should it be a think tank? Should it be a graduate school for Asian studies? Should it teach Asians and Pacific islanders useful trades? They did the latter in the beginning.

Well, the Center always had an identity problem. Although it has had some very good people, it hasn't accomplished many of its goals, as organizations tend not to do when they're not sure of what they want to be. The Center has had a succession of presidents, some very impressive, some less so. The present president, a fellow named Charles Morrison, became president in 1999. He and I came to the East-West Center in 1982. He was a young Ph.D. and Japan expert who had worked for Senator Roth of Delaware. A very bright guy, he is unassuming and it surprised everyone when he was chosen president. Usually an outsider has been chosen like the last president, Mike Oksenberg. Mike is a first-rate China scholar who had worked on the National Security Council in the Carter years but not a great manager. To be successful as the president of the East-West Center you must have a deep understanding of Hawaiian politics. Anyone who comes from the mainland, as they call it in Hawaii, and isn't sensitive to local ethnic politics is doomed to failure. That has been the downfall of many of the East-West Center presidents. I think Charles has a much better sense of the local situation than most of his predecessors, having lived there since 1982. He knows how Hawaii works, and his mentor is the former governor, George Ariyoshi, who is the chairman of the board of the Center.

But the Center had some excellent people, along with these 1960s hippie types who never grew up. The Center has been particularly effective on population issues. The Center has trained any number of Asian population experts. The Center also has a good energy policy section. It dealt with oil and other issues - coal, nuclear issues, and so on. I was located in the Pacific Islands Development Program, which is not actually a Center program but housed in the Center. The program is funded by the Pacific island nations and Japan. There must be some U.S. money in there, too. One of the most successful things I did while I was there was to organize a week-long seminar on the Pacific islands for third country diplomats and U.S. Government and business people. It was a great success

Library of Congress

because Hawaii is home to more Pacific island experts than anywhere in the world. The Australian National University in Canberra is the only comparable institution.

Hawaii has many distinguished Pacific experts. Many of them came out there during the war and were involved with the Pacific islands during and after the war. Others have been attracted to Hawaii from prestigious universities on the mainland. The climate and general image of paradise is a boon for recruiting people to come to Hawaii. The quality of the faculty at the University of Hawaii is higher than the quality of the student body, because top-notch academicians want to live in paradise. The Pacific Island Studies Program is a very good. Professor Bob Kiste heads it up. I helped to break down the hostility between the university faculty and the East-West Center staff. In those days the East-West Center pay was based on federal pay scales which were much higher than the UH pay scales. That has since changed, and the academics are making more money than the staff at the East-West Center. But I brokered closer and happier cooperation between the two institutions.

One of the things we did in our Pacific islands seminar was to attract officials from foreign governments to learn about the Pacific islands. We got them from embassies around the region and from Washington. Then we brought in experts from the Pacific islands and Pacific island experts to lecture and the seminar was extremely successful. We put up many of the participants at the East-West Center. The Center's boarding facilities are fairly spartan, but for a few days they're very nice. We lived at the Center when I was a diplomat-in-residence. Unlike a lot of diplomats-in-residence, we were welcomed with open arms, and provided with a rent-free apartment. It was two small student apartments combined and it was very nice. Jeannette Paulson at the East-West Center was the guiding spirit of the Hawaiian Film Festival, which is a film festival of films with Asian themes or films made by Asians. She has left the Center and has organized film festivals all around the world. She kindly set up a South Pacific Film Festival for the participants at the seminar. There are a great number of documentaries on the islands, particularly Australian. There are also some New Zealand and American documentaries. Most of the

Library of Congress

early documentaries were made during World War II but there is a whole new generation making Pacific island films. Each night we showed a documentary. In a sense, much of what I did at the Center is what an USIS cultural attach# does in an embassy.

Q: Were you getting much reflection from the various island groups or were they sending people there and how was it, if they did, how did that work?

BODDE: Well, the islands sent some people. One of the things the Center does is to house students, mostly American, Asian, and Pacific island students. They are on East-West scholarships and study at the graduate schools of the university. The Center does the paperwork, all that stuff, and puts many of them up in the Center's multi-cultural student dorm. The students would earn master degrees or in some cases Ph.D. degrees in Asia-related or Pacific island-related studies.

The Center would get Pacific island students, and actually, some of them studied in the Pacific islands program. Not surprisingly, given the lack of transportation and the large distances between some of these islands (we think of them as all clustered together, but there's thousands of miles between some of them) they often know very little about each other.

Q: And very expensive. Continental Air is not a benevolent organization.

BODDE: Right. It's very expensive to run an airline out there. But anyhow, they often didn't know much about each other's culture. A Cook Islander, for example, wouldn't necessarily know anything about Micronesia, and most Fijians would know little about Tonga. In general, there wasn't a lot of knowledge among the islanders except their own island group. You don't have to go back very far to see that the Pacific island nations, as we know them now, are a recent development. Most of them were colonies and very often the administrative unit binding them together was for the convenience of the British, Australian, or New Zealand administrators and not because of historical or cultural connections. In general the boundaries were more natural than they were in Africa

Library of Congress

because, after all, they are islands. Only in some cases did the colonial powers draw lines through the middle and say, "You're this, and you're that." But still -

Q: *Samoa, yes.*

BODDE: The Samoan islands are one of the exceptions and they have many of the problems you get when you divide an ethnic group by an artificial political border. That's right. For most Pacific islanders their primary identity is with the island or island group they are born on. National identity combining various island groups is a secondary identity. The recent troubles in Fiji reflect not only a split between Fijians and Indo-Fijians but also divisions among the Fijians themselves based upon geography and wealth. So the study of the Pacific islands by Pacific islanders in Hawaii made sense. The cross-cultural friendship that developed among Pacific islanders while studying in Hawaii has been a unifying factor in the region ever since the Micronesians came there to study in the 1960s.

Q: *Were we trying to train civil servants, diplomats, and the like there?*

BODDE: As I mentioned we had a program, which was instituted under Dick Holbrooke, to send FSOs for Pacific islands training and then assign them to the region.

Q: *But I was thinking of the reverse. Were we trying to bring Fiji Islanders or was somebody training Fiji Island diplomats?*

BODDE: Some years ago we trained Philippine diplomats.

Q: *We did. They came to FSI.*

BODDE: Well, by the '80s, we had stopped doing it. However, when I was at the East-West Center, FSI asked me to go out to Micronesia and make a survey of what kind of diplomatic training the Micronesians needed and to make recommendations as to what training FSI should provide. The U.S. was obligated under the compacts of free association to provide some diplomatic training for the Micronesians. I went out there

Library of Congress

and wrote a report with recommendations. I think, generally speaking, the training we provide at FSI is based on my survey and the recommendations. At the time, the East-West Center was considering whether the Center should get into the business of training foreign diplomats. Therefore the Center agreed to pay part of my travel costs so that I could visit Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, and The Fletcher School in Boston to see what experience they had in training foreign diplomats.

The timing of my trip turned out to be fortuitous for me. My assignment as diplomat-in-residence was coming to an end and it was very useful for me to visit Washington. I wanted to go to Germany, and my friends in the Department's German mafia wanted me to go as consul general in Frankfurt. Arthur Burns was ambassador. Although according to Department's personnel policy ambassadors weren't supposed to choose their consul generals, Arthur Burns was Arthur Burns. One time, his DCM, Bill Woessner told him that the embassy had received a cable that the post was about to be inspected. Burns asked him if they were coming to audit the funds and see that the embassy was obeying the pertinent regulations. Bill told him the inspectors would also review the conduct of U.S. policy towards Germany. Burns' reply was, "I thought that is what the President sent me here to do." End of story. I don't think Burns ever received the inspectors. In reality, Burns got to choose anybody he wanted, and so I had to have an interview with him if I wanted to go to Frankfurt. The interview went well and I was assigned to Frankfurt.

On the training front it turned out that none of these schools had been engaged in such training for quite some time. However, when I went to see the dean at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) he told me the only program that SAIS had that trained diplomats was a special master's program for mid-grade Foreign Service Officers or mid-grade civil servants. I asked him what one had to do to earn that degree. When he told me the requirements, I told him that I had completed all the requirements he had mentioned when Department sent me to SAIS from 1966 to 1967. He told me that SAIS must still have my records and that I should write him a letter requesting my degree.

Library of Congress

I did so when I got back to Hawaii and SAIS granted me a master's degree. Wasn't that wonderful?

The Center decided not to get into the diplomatic training. One of the things that I recommended for the Micronesians, and now I see the Department does with the Germans, is the U.S. has an exchange program where an FSO goes and works in the German Foreign Office, and we take a German into the State Department. I recommended we take some Micronesian trainees into the Department. Australia and New Zealand have such a program and they put Pacific islanders in their embassies as well as in the foreign ministries in Canberra or Wellington. Well, Security had problems with this when I recommended it and I am sure they are not happy with the U.S.-German exchanges now. You have to put some kind of firewall around them for security reasons, but it can be done if you have the will to do it.

Q: I got involved a little in it later on in the mid-'90s, where I went out to Ponape one time.

BODDE: Jim Morton?

Q: Jim Morton. And I talked about the consular work. And I got the feeling, though, that the main thing they were doing was they were using this money for training to let them take trips. I'm not sure how much actually penetrated.

BODDE: Well, you actually went to the better of the two Micronesian programs. The program with the Federated States of Micronesia is better than the program in the Marshall Islands. In the Marshall Islands, where I was ambassador, the government had sent the children of the president, including his daughter, who ran a disco in Majuro. Well I guess you have to be diplomatic to run a disco. The main reason they participated in the program was to get a trip to Washington at U.S. Government expense. We rejected one of their candidates because her only qualification was that she had just won a local beauty queen contest. Even so, a few serious people did get the training, and served as Marshallese

Library of Congress

diplomats. Obviously, diplomatic work is different when you represent a massive country like the United States or a tiny Pacific island state.

Q: They only need one person in Washington and maybe one in Japan and that's about it.

BODDE: That's right. Maybe in a couple of other places - Australia might make sense for them and maybe a consul in Oklahoma, where many Micronesians in the U.S. live. For instance, in Suva we had an ambassador from Tuvalu, which in those days had a population of 8,000 people. Tuvalu had an ambassador because there were a number of Tuvaluan students at the University of the South Pacific. The ambassador looked after them and the Tuvalu community in Suva. The small country missions do not need economic sections and political sections. They may need a consular/commercial officer to assist the ambassador but that's the extent of it.

My wife and I had a very good year at the East-West Center. It almost made up for the disappointment of getting bounced out of Fiji early. We put down roots in Hawaii and I now teach at the University of Hawaii graduate school each summer.

Q: Well, now, let's talk about the next job - starting in '84?

BODDE: This would be '83. The next job was Germany. As I said, I came back and interviewed with Arthur Burns, and it went well, so I was assigned to the consulate as Consul General Frankfurt.

Q: Could you talk a little about the interview?

BODDE: Oh, the interview was a bit daunting. Burns was a very imposing figure. He had been chairman of the Federal Reserve Board and the first chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors. He had been famous in the academic world even before that. Burns wrote the definitive book on business cycles. Not only was he a man of great prominence, but he was also very smart, and very intellectually demanding. When he

Library of Congress

interviewed you he really wanted to find out something about your character, what you knew, and how you handled yourself. He was particularly sensitive to people pretending to know something they didn't. It was a fatal mistake to try and bluff Arthur Burns because you were going to get shot down. I went in and talked with him. I knew quite a bit about Germany but when he asked me something I wasn't sure of I told him so. When I was Consul General Frankfurt he often would come to Frankfurt to confer with the president of the Bundesbank, the German national bank. His aide would just call down and say that tomorrow the ambassador is going to be having lunch with the president of the Bundesbank. He wouldn't want anything but was letting me know he was in town. Sometimes he would come and I would be involved with the visit. He very kindly offered to sponsor me for membership in the Cosmos Club, which I didn't take up, but later I did join. When I was DAS in EUR he had left Germany and he was semi-retired. I used to have lunch with him every three or four weeks and tell him what was going on in Germany. We became friends. In 1989 we found out that he was in the hospital at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. His wife was staying at the Holiday Inn across from the hospital so she could see him everyday. We called her and suggested we come by on the weekend and take her to lunch. We went up to Baltimore and took Mrs. Burns to lunch. After lunch she suggested we go with her to see Arthur. It was awkward because he was cranky, and obviously very, very sick. She told us that he was going to get out of the hospital in a week or two and they were going up so he could recuperate at his place in Vermont. He had a cabin there which he loved and where he has gone every summer for the last 50 years. To give you an example, when he was ambassador to Germany, they had the annual Bohemian Grove meeting in California. It's an all-guy conservative Republican kind of thing.

Q: Up among the redwoods.

BODDE: Right. And they're famous for peeing in the woods. In fact, in January we were on a Millennium cruise. I met a fellow who had a knit shirt with an emblem I didn't recognize. I asked him about it and he said it was the Bohemian Grove emblem. When I joked that it should show two men peeing in the woods he laughed and explained how it works. The

Library of Congress

club is divided up into lodges and Henry Kissinger and George Shultz are members of his lodge. One year Kissinger brought the Singapore leader, Lee Kuan Yew, who was taken aback by the others urinating in the woods whenever they felt like it. In Singapore you would be fined or even sentenced to prison for such an act.

BODDE: In Singapore they have laws forbidding all sorts of things. When they introduced elevators into working-class housing, they passed a law prohibiting urinating in elevators. But anyhow, back to Arthur Burns. If you were an ambitious Republican during the Reagan Administration, the place to be each summer was Bohemian Grove. Reagan went every year when he was president so it was the place to be seen. One year Secretary of State Shultz invited German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to Bohemian Grove. Well, any other U.S. Ambassador to Germany, especially if he belonged to Bohemian Grove as Arthur Burns did, would make sure he attended to protect his interest. Not Burns. He was secure enough that he went on his usual vacation to Vermont. After Bohemian Grove, Chancellor Schmidt went to Vermont to visit him! This gives you a little bit of an idea of Burns' prestige.

Arthur Burns was a good man to work for, and he was the perfect ambassador to Germany. To the Germans, few people have as much status as a professor and having been chairman of the Federal Reserve was icing on the cake. With his professorial manner and white mane, central casting couldn't have found a better envoy. He had a lot of influence. The president of Germany at the time was an old friend, Richard Von Weizsaecker, and he called me at home one day. It was funny because I was giving a lunch with the U.S. Army V Corps commander to talk about the problems we shared. Anyhow, I think the commander was General Colin Powell at the time. Our housekeeper interrupted us to tell me that the German President was on the phone. He called to complain that Arthur Burns was forever lecturing him that the Germans did not work as hard as they used to. He wanted me to tell the ambassador to stop lecturing the German president. I didn't, of course, but that was pure Arthur Burns.

Library of Congress

So in 1983 I went to Frankfurt as consul general. It's the largest consulate general in the world. And so it was just a great experience, because -

Q: You were there from when to when?

BODDE: From 1983 to 1986. Just the management part of it was a challenge. Learning to manage 575 people, most of whom were from other agencies, was the equivalent of earning an MBA. You were faced with the chronic dilemma we face in many places in the world, that is, responsibility without authority. Most of the personnel do not work for you, and you have to use your negotiating skills and what limited authority you have to achieve your goals. I did control the consulate housing because the facilities came under the State Department.

For example I told the CIA that I would not accept any additional agency personnel unless the agency funded two full-time positions in the consulate general's general services office. I found out later I didn't have the legal authority, but you often have as much authority as you're willing to assert. I assumed I had the same authority as an ambassador and that I could say no to additional personnel. I told them we didn't want cover positions that were just on paper; I wanted full-time people including another GSO, because I had the largest State Department-run housing project in the whole world, and I only had one GSO. That was because we took the assistant GSO and made him the systems manager. I also needed a facilities management specialist. We went head-to-head for a couple of months, and the embassy kept saying I should give in. Of course if Arthur Burns had told me to give in, I would have given in, but they didn't bother Burns with administrative details.

It was the administrative counselor at the embassy who was pressing me. I told him that we would not accept additional people if we don't have the wherewithal to take care of them. Finally, the Agency gave in. And I think they were smart. They realized that I was very cooperative on the stuff that counts, and believe me there was a lot of stuff going on in Frankfurt. So they gave in. Often it was the people that you didn't have authority over

Library of Congress

that would run afoul of the German authorities. Then they would come running to me to intervene. I guess we had about 2,000 to 3,000 people living in our housing. Among them we had about a hundred couriers and their families. The courier service used Frankfurt as a base to handle Europe, Africa and Asia. There are two places where we have couriers overseas - Thailand was one and Frankfurt was the other. The hundred couriers from Frankfurt were on the road most of the time so we had to worry about their families. We particularly had problems when we had tense situations, and we did have real terrorism problems. These wives were there alone with a couple of kids and normally had little to do with the consulate except on occasion with the GSO. Yet, at the end of the day, we were responsible for their welfare and safety. But it wasn't just the couriers, although their frequent absences complicated matters.

There were all the many other federal agencies that came under consulate responsibility. Many of their employees had little experience living in a foreign country. Our major task was to find ways to get to these people so we could help them and, hopefully, to keep them out of trouble. The biggest problem was keeping the lines of communications open. Sometimes they would get in trouble. I remember we had a case of a woman, well into middle age, who went on home leave, and her boyfriend, an ex-GI, took up with another woman. When she came back she was furious. Her son, a man in his 40s, came on a visit. Would you believe it? To take revenge for the other woman stealing his mother's boyfriend we caught him pouring sugar into the gas tank of the other woman's Mercedes. You have even more serious problems such as a scoutmaster molesting kids. It was like being the mayor of a good size town with international terrorism thrown in.

Q: This is Tape 3 of an addendum for the interview with Bill Bodde. Yes.

BODDE: One time the military people came to see me. The daughter of one of our communicators was dating a guy who was wanted for murder. They wanted permission to tap the family phone. The guy was a bad apple who had taken his discharge in Germany. That was one of these problems that I used to discuss with V Corps. GI's would take their

Library of Congress

discharges and stay in Germany. Suddenly when they got in trouble, they were no longer the Army's problem but the consulate's problem. A few of them were criminal types.

Well, this guy stabbed another GI in a bar, but he ran away and was wanted for murder. So I called in the family and said the military wanted to tap their phone. I was most concerned about his daughter. When they told me that they were going to send her to live with her sister in Colorado in a month, I suggested that they send her away right away to get her away from the guy, whom we believed was in Germany. I told him that it was too dangerous for her to keep her in Frankfurt for another month. He sent his daughter to her sister right away. I'm sure that the police would have liked us to keep her in Frankfurt as bait to trap the guy, but I was more interested in her welfare and her family's welfare. Well, it was really strange because a few months later, my security officer comes in to tell me that he had a phone call in the middle of the night from Colorado. The police had picked up this guy who was supposedly wanted for murder, but they could not find any outstanding warrant from INTERPOL.

When we called the Germans, they said they had not issued an international arrest warrant for his arrest. The German police felt that it would be very difficult to successfully prosecute him when the witnesses were scattered and he would claim he acted in self-defense. They were convinced that in a fight between two GI's in a bar they would never get a conviction. I said, it looks more to me that the German authorities didn't really care if one American murders another American. I said that you could be sure that if he had murdered a German, they would be requesting extradition.

I went to see the minister-president's (governor) chief-of-staff and asked him to do something about it. He told me that there would be a warrant sent out right away. They did, but it turned out that it took too long and the Denver police had released the guy. However, the idiot got in a drunken brawl and was arrested again, so we had him. The Germans sent police over to pick him up and he was extradited. They were unable to get a conviction in

Library of Congress

the German court and he went free. They were right in their assessment, but I still think we were right in holding their feet to the fire.

If you know consular work you know how complicated extradition can be. When I was in Sweden we tried to extradite an African-American bank robber. The Swedes wouldn't extradite him because he couldn't get a fair trial in America. Custody cases are even more difficult. If you read the case in yesterday's paper you know what I mean.

Q: Custody, a father, his German wife illegally took the kids and went back to Germany where she gave the children into social welfare, and the father is an American and hasn't been able to see his kid, or he can't have custody of the kids.

BODDE: Right, because the German court says that it would be traumatic for the kids to return to the U.S. It is better that the children should stay in foster care in Germany rather than being with their natural father in America. Germans are terrible on custody cases and now it has moved up on the official U.S.-German agenda. Secretary of State Albright raised it with the German foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, who was in Washington. He's an old radical who became a leader in the Green Party. The first time he was ever invited to an official American's home was when I invited him to our house in Frankfurt for lunch. He was a minister in the Hessen State Government at the time. Anyhow, he told Secretary Albright that he would look into it, but he told her that foreign ministers do not have very much influence on German courts.

My tenure in Frankfurt was complicated by an increase in terrorist activity. In 1984 we had three major bombings in Frankfurt. A bomb went off at the airport and killed a couple of people. Another bomb killed a person at Rhine-Main Air Force Base, which is next to the airport, and a bomb went off by the non-commissioned officers club in the city by the PX (post exchange). In addition, terrorists firebombed the consulate general's residence in Frankfurt.

Library of Congress

Q: Who was bombing?

BODDE: The Red Army Faction was responsible. The Red Army Faction was the successor to the infamous Bader-Meinhof gang and they were much better organized. To my knowledge, the German intelligence services never penetrated the RAF and very few of them got arrested. The Red Army Faction firebombed our residence over the holidays, right after our son Peter and his family had left. Peter was consul in Hamburg at the time and they were down for the Christmas holidays. That night after they left the RAF threw a couple of Molotov cocktails at the house. The RAF waited until Peter, his wife and the kids had left because, for image reasons, they did not attack women and children. A tree next to the house caught fire. If it had burned a few feet higher our ancient roof would have caught fire and we would have had serious damage. So we were lucky. Clearly they had the house under surveillance for some time.

After the bombing we upgraded the security at the residence. They put in a guard booth, sensors, more TV cameras, and better lighting. Before the bombing we employed a German guard service at night that was barely competent. We really beefed up the guard service when our Marine gunnery sergeant took his discharge in Frankfurt, found German financing, and put together a really good security firm. His firm also provided guards for the embassy and the consulates general throughout Germany. He introduced discipline into the guard service. I'll give you an example of how bad the German guards had been. One Saturday morning Ingrid and I were having breakfast - we'd sent the help away on the weekend so we'd have some privacy- and we heard a bang. We went out, and the German guard had shot himself in the foot.

Q: Oh, no.

BODDE: Yes, the old play-with-the-gun thing. Not that things didn't happen after the new security people were in place. The shift supervisor, a former LA policeman, stopped to use

Library of Congress

the toilet we had installed in the garage. He had a heart attack and Ingrid tried to revive him with CPR but he was too far gone.

Not long after the firebombing the German police raided an apartment in Frankfurt and discovered a treasure trove of RAF documents. Among the papers was a "hit list" with my name at the top. The Germans put a security detail with me 24 hours a day except when I stayed in the house. I had three bodyguards and a follow-on car. One would ride in my car, and the other two would be in the follow-on car. They were exceptionally good people and part of a group of about 15 anti-terrorist state police who guarded VIP's. They rotated and each week you'd get a different three. They took security very seriously. Two or three times they and the military intelligence people came to warn me of a possible attack. They would tell me that although they were not sure exactly what was going to happen, there was an increase in the activities of the terrorist underground. Therefore they would advise us to leave town for a few weeks. The most effective way to disrupt the terrorists was for the target to leave and undo whatever work and preparations they had undertaken. Once we went back to the States and once we went to a friend's house in Italy. We would just take off without telling anybody except the State Department and the embassy. In Germany if I went to dinner, my bodyguards went with us. In fact they went everywhere with us. It was like the Secretary or the President's Secret Service detail. I had dinner in Frankfurt with an old friend of mine, who was DCM in Lebanon. After dinner the two of us were sitting by the fireplace having a brandy and a cigar. He asked me if I carried a weapon or kept a gun in the house. I told him I did not carry a weapon nor did I have any guns in the house because our grandchildren often visited us. He told me that was fine but at least I should know how to use the weapons of my security detail. There have been situations where people have been attacked and their bodyguards killed or wounded and they were unable to defend themselves with their bodyguards' weapons because they didn't know how to use them. That made sense to me and I talked to my detail. From then on, every month we'd go out to the police range and I would fire their different weapons and we would do practice drills together. They carried Sig Sauer handguns. It

Library of Congress

is an excellent nine-millimeter weapon. The Navy Seals use Sig Sauers because, like the old M-1 rifle you can drop it in the mud and pick it up and it still will fire. They also had Uzis and an AK-47, Kalashnikov. When I was leaving Frankfurt, I wanted to give them a thank you gift. They told me they had problems getting ammunition for the AK-47. My security officer called his colleague in Lebanon where on the street you can buy anything you want. So at the farewell barbecue we hosted for them I gave them a case of ammunition as a farewell present. They were delighted and I thought it was a pretty unique farewell gift.

So the security situation was very serious in Frankfurt. I'm no more courageous than the next guy, but I didn't stay up nights thinking about it. It didn't raise my blood pressure or anything. I got used to the bodyguards and, in fact, I enjoyed their company. It was tougher on my wife and family.

Q: Yes.

BODDE: They didn't guard her because the Red Army Faction didn't go after women and children because it was bad PR. So when I got out of the car, they stayed with me, and she was on her own. That wasn't what bothered her. What bothered her was worrying about me. I read about this situation once which is called "the copilot's syndrome." That is, those copilots who survive a crash are usually in worse shape than pilots who survive. This is because, unlike the pilot, they can't do anything about the crash, which is out of their control, and yet they are a part of it. It was tough on her. One time we went on vacation to Hawaii, and were walking along Waikiki. Suddenly she spots a brown paper bag lying in the sand. She tensed up and asked me to check it out.

It was full of empty beer cans but you are conditioned to look for anything out of the usual and she took it seriously. When we were firebombed she didn't run to the window or go out in the yard to see what happened. We went into the safe-haven room and got a couple of buckets of water and waited for the police to come. She was calm and did the right thing. I have no doubt that her wartime experiences as a teenager in Germany prepared her to

Library of Congress

take on almost anything. Yet, it was tough on her. But that was a part of life in Germany in those years.

After the firebombing, Ingrid looked at mug shots of Red Army Faction people. She recognized one woman whom she had seen around the house before the incident. Years later when the Wall came down the Germans arrested the woman in East Germany. She was one of the six or so top people in the Red Army Faction. They were very professional. We had a TV camera at the front gate and before they threw the firebombs they taped over the lens while our guard was on his rounds. Later we had two guards so there was always one in the front and the back. But terrorism was and is a part of Foreign Service life. Did you see Mike Causey's farewell article in the Washington Post? He wrote his last "Federal Page" the other day. It's a very nice article, and he said it's been great writing it for all those years. He said, "I've known a lot of wonderful civil servants and I've known a lot of people who were willing to risk their life for their country. I don't think there are too many people in corporate America or in politics that are willing to do that, but there are a lot of people working for the U.S. Government that do it all the time." That's true.

The consular work was interesting. You were a consular officer.

Q: One of my first jobs in the Foreign Service... Frankfurt, for many people my age, was our "mother consulate" job, and one of my jobs was protection and welfare, and I kept a diary. That's the point person there.

BODDE: I'm sure the locals that worked with you were there in my time.

Q: There were a few - Irene Bruckhagen, Anneliese Steig, and one other one.

BODDE: I don't remember her name but we had one woman whose willingness to go the extra mile for Americans in distress was legendary.

Q: Probably it was Irene Bruckhagen, I would suspect.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Once she even bandaged the feet of some destitute guy who came into the consulate with his feet all blistered. I had a very good citizenship and welfare officer who was kept very busy. We had between 100 and 120 people in jail at any given time. I don't know if you had as many military personnel in the consular district made up of Hessen, Rheinland Pfalz, and Saarland.

Q: When I was there we had about 100,000 civilians, and the 97th General Hospital was cranking out children, babies born - I was baby birth officer one time, including one of mine too, but this was back in the '50s.

BODDE: Yes, I think the numbers grew over the years. Of course, since the end of the Cold War they have declined drastically. I think we had 120,000 military personnel in the district, so if you multiply that by three or four you get an idea of the civilian population. We always had a bunch of people in jail, and in fact, all our consular officers had to take turns visiting prisoners. They were in jail for everything from murder to theft, but most of them were doing time for drugs.

Q: We didn't have as many because drugs were not a deal.

BODDE: In a big place like Frankfurt there were a number of women's clubs. There was a consulate ladies club, there was a military wives club and there was the huge Frankfurt International Women's Club. My wife had to belong to all of them and for her sins was elected the president of the International Women's Club. She spent a lot of time adjudicating disputes between the long-time German members, whose main purpose in life was to keep younger German women from becoming members, and the transient international community. There was an interesting businessmen's wives club in the Taunus. It was a rather successful attempt to replicate the support system the U.S. Consulate provided for its families. When new business families arrived, the Taunus Wives Club would try to do for them what our community liaison office did for consulate families.

Library of Congress

Anyhow, in the spirit of community service the Taunus Wives Club decided to visit Americans in jail. The problem was that one of these women was really good-looking, so all of a sudden all sorts of prisoners were claiming to be American so they could meet with this good-looking American woman. The large American prison population was always a big part of the consulate's workload. I will never forget - I obviously can't go into details - but the son of one of our senior colleagues from another post got arrested at the airport on drug charges. It was really tough calling somebody you know and telling him his son had been arrested. The son wasn't a kid by that time; he was a grown man, but that doesn't make it any easier on the parents. That said, citizen protection is probably one of the most interesting jobs in our business.

Q: Oh, yes, because it's not just one thing. It covers a whole spectrum of things. Tell me, did you notice that Germany was no longer the tourist destination that it once was? Americans used to flock into Germany, but it got the reputation for being expensive, and now package tours take them to France, Portugal, Spain, Italy and maybe the Mediterranean.

BODDE: I'm sure that's right. It also has a lot to do with the dollar. In the old days the dollar was worth more than four deutschmarks. In any event, Frankfurt is mostly a transit stop. Actually, it turned out to be a very nice place to live, but people don't visit Frankfurt to see the sights. They just go to the airport and get on a bus or a train or whatever and go somewhere else. But I don't think the number of tourists has dropped in total numbers, because our population has increased and more Americans travel, but I don't know. I don't think tourists were our major problem. For the citizenship and protection person, it was also resident Americans and kids bumming around Europe. The majority of our problem cases were related to the large military presence. It was a busy shop. I had a very good officer, Tom Rice, who was mature and had very excellent judgment. He never panicked and he was helpful but was not so soft that he spent every waking hour at work giving all his money away. At the same time he was compassionate and imaginative. I think it's

Library of Congress

really an important job. He had a good sense of what to bring to my attention and what to take care of himself. Congress passes laws with unintended consequences. For example, they passed a law that if you were convicted of a drug crime, there was no way you would be allowed into the United States. We would have cases where the German wife took the rap to save her military husband from drug charges and then she would be banned from entering the U.S. forever. He could return to the states, and his kids could come, but his wife couldn't, and there was no way you could get that waived. I would get calls from leading German politicians pleading the spouse's case on humanitarian grounds but there was nothing I could do. There were some real human tragedies, but there was nothing we could do about them.

Q: What about the military? How did you find relations with the military, because, you know, this waxes and wanes? It depends on the personalities.

BODDE: Well, I think that's a lot of it. Obviously, there were generals who had well-developed political instincts, like Colin Powell. He was much easier to work with because he understood the political dimension, not just the military dimension, of his decisions.

Q: He was corps commander then.

BODDE: He was V Corps commander for a short time and then he came back to be deputy director of the National Security Council. He wasn't there very long when the President called him back to Washington. He didn't want to leave his command because he was, first of all, a soldier. V Corps commander is a big job, and he loved it. He told me, "As corps commander, I have two Mercedes limousines, my own jet, a command helicopter and two jeeps. Now I will go back and drive myself to work at the White House every day." But it was clear that he was special and had a great future ahead of him. Relations between the U.S. forces and the Germans had undergone a transformation. The Germans were less passive and certainly less tolerant about being inconvenienced by the U.S. military. You can imagine. You were there in the '50s. That's when I was in the army

Library of Congress

over there and it was not that long after the war. People remember the CARE packages and generosity of the Americans. By the 1980s, that generation was long in the tooth and the new generation of Germans didn't have those sentimental attachments to the U.S.

The presence of hundreds of thousands of American troops in a relatively small and heavily populated country like Germany was bound to create problems in civil-military relations. In fact, I think it's amazing that after all these years there had not been more friction. Of course, it has gotten worse since the end of the Cold War. But even back in the 1980s the argument that the U.S. forces were keeping the Soviets at bay had lost a lot of its impact. Germans were very unhappy about the noise from low flying military aircraft. Military maneuvers were also a real irritant, with U.S. tanks tearing up the roads, convoys clogging the autobahns and helicopters flying at nap of the earth levels. Firing ranges were a constant source of complaints. Years ago the firing ranges were out in the middle of nowhere, but now Germans live nearby and they don't want to put up with night firing.

By the 1980s there was much more tension in the relationship. For instance, the army wanted to move a helicopter wing to Wiesbaden. That created a political firestorm even though the helicopters made less noise than the autobahn that ran next to heliport. The perception was that the helicopters were the problem. The U.S. military's view was that we are in Germany as part of NATO to defend the free world. Strategically, or at least tactically, it was better to have the helicopters in Wiesbaden and the Germans are just going to have to live with that. The new breed of officers were more politically sophisticated and they understood that sometimes compromise was necessary if we were to get along with the Germans.

The army was better at civil relations than the air force because the army is used to living and operating within civilian communities. In Europe the army had lots of people living off base and is in the habit of interfacing with the German population. I saw a major part of my job to be smoothing the civil-military relations. It wasn't just relations between the military and Germans. But there was also the relations between the military and American

Library of Congress

civilians. In the consulate general we all sorts of military units, including recruiters from all the military branches. In addition to the marine detachment we had the marine company in charge of all the marine security guards in West and Eastern Europe. I even found a military unit in our buildings I didn't even know about when we had a fire drill one day. It was military spook unit that kept an eye on the Soviet Military Mission in West Germany; a relic of the occupation days.

Over the years, we turned parts of the consulate housing area into offices because we didn't have the space downtown at the consulate. We had the courier's facility offices out there. Of course, we had enormous CIA presence and so on. So you had to work on these relations as well. For example, in the wake of the bombings I mentioned earlier, the Department instructed us to fence in the housing area immediately. Well, parts of the original housing area were now German apartments. In other places our apartments were set back not more than 15 feet off the streets. Putting up a fence would only provide shrapnel that would make a bomb more deadly. Fencing off streets was both controversial and ineffective and would have created serious problems of access for the Germans and Americans. The problem was that the Department didn't care if it made sense or not; but wanted to be seen as doing something. My security people told me the most useful thing to do was to coat all the windows in the housing area with a protective plastic to keep them from shattering. It would cost a fraction of what installing a fence would cost and would be much more effective. In fact, it was the plastic coating on the windows that limited the damage at the NCO club bombing. When the bomb went off, the windows ballooned in and ballooned out, and nobody was seriously hurt. The high rate of casualties at the second bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon was caused, in part, by moving into the building before the windows had been coated with Mylar.

Q: I had my windows in my residence in Saigon - this is back in '69 - had Mylar - in fact, the Mylar coating was reflective so you couldn't look in.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Yes that is an additional benefit. Well, anyhow we had a big management problem on our hands. First of all, we had to convince the Department. The Department's attitude was "Bodde, we are giving you a million dollars to fence in the housing area and if another bomb goes off and people are hurt it is your ass." The second part of the problem was that we had a couple of thousand people living in the consulate housing, many of whom had only a tenuous relationship to the consulate general. To calm them down we had to nip rumors in the bud and convince the community that we were looking after their welfare. We didn't want them to become hysterical, and the rumor mill was already going like crazy. Our message was that while we were not going to put up a fence because it would do more harm than good, we were going to take other steps that would make them safer. We held a number of town meetings at the housing area to discuss security. My deputy, Merle Arp, did an excellent job at these meetings of listening to the community's concerns and explaining what we were going to do and why. I set up an interagency committee and we thrashed out the alternatives. At the time my attitude was that I would do whatever I thought was right and not worry about my career. I knew I had the community behind my decision to resist putting up fence. We did not fence in the housing area and we did Mylar all the windows. I consider that a management success story.

One of the things that you mentioned when we were on the coffee break was how different the academic world is than ours. Like many Foreign Service Officers I had always thought that if I hadn't gone into our business I would have become an academic.

Q: Yes, that's sort the way I was pointed.

BODDE: Well the East-West Center experience convinced me that I had made the right choice. I must say I have enjoyed teaching at the University of Hawaii for the past four years. Each summer I do a half-semester course on world politics and business. But I'm left alone to develop my own curriculum and the dean is very supportive. It's a very nice experience. But when I was at the East-West Center I saw the pettiness of academe life,

Library of Congress

up close. I like to think that pettiness is the fringe benefit of the academic life. I mean, I would go to faculty meetings, and the nonsense that some of the academicians would spout and the hours-long debates over minor issues were unbelievable. If someone tried that at an interagency meeting in Washington they would be laughed out of the room.

There was also a one hand washes the other mentality in academe. You don't criticize your colleague's work and he or she doesn't criticize yours. Of course, you band together against outsiders. I have experienced that first hand. I'm doing a book on the South Pacific which I wanted the University of Hawaii to publish. I ran right into a wall. How could a non-academic know anything about the South Pacific, and even if you might know something we won't let you break our rice bowl. Now, I think we can all think of bad things we put up with in the Foreign Service, but we have a lot of good and smart people.

Q: And also, at a certain point, you get on with it. If there's a crisis, all of a sudden a not particularly congenial group will be right there and, you know, they're there. There was a book written. It was almost a pejorative term, but its point is it's a pretty good club.

BODDE: Is that the name of the book?

Q: Yes, it's about the old Foreign Service.

BODDE: I'd like to read that some time. Do you have it hear? Can I borrow it?

Q: I don't know. I'll have to take a look and take a peek at that.

BODDE: That leads right into the next thing I was going to talk about and that is: probably the most important thing about being CG in Frankfurt was its location. First, it is a big place. The large housing area attracts the many government agencies there. You have Rhine-Main Airport near Frankfurt and three large military hospitals nearby. That is why so many victims from terrorist hijackings and hostage situations are brought to Frankfurt. All sorts of horrible situations would end up in Frankfurt. We also got into the spy swapping

Library of Congress

business because we had the U.S. Air Force facilities there to do it. I set up a special interagency task force to handle such incidents. I am not fond of committees as such, but when you require interagency cooperation and coordination they are a necessity. The key is in knowing how to use them.

If we heard on the radio or TV that there was a plane hijacking, or some other hostage taking situation that might end up in Frankfurt, I would convene the special task force. More than likely the victims would end up in Wiesbaden Hospital. They'd come into the Rhine Main Air Base, and be taken to Wiesbaden or the 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt. We had a number of plane hijackings and other incidents while I was there. When Levin, the Newsweek Magazine reporter who was a hostage, in Beirut escaped he was flown to Frankfurt. We had a very interesting spy swap that involved the Russian dissident, Sharansky. The consulate general was very involved.

That was really a peculiar situation. I got a phone call one day from Bill Woessner, the DCM in Bonn, telling me that we have a special case that he wanted me to handle. A famous dissident is going to be exchanged and we want you to receive him in Frankfurt. The case all has all sorts of political implications, so I want you to see that everything goes smoothly. His wife, who has led a high profile public campaign to get him out, will be coming from Washington with a DAS from EUR. The Israelis will have a plane waiting to take him and his wife to Israel. Your should receive him and Ambassador Burt who will be arriving on a special plane from Berlin. Keep the press and everybody away from them. Put him and his wife in a secure area at the airport where an air force doctor can look at him and see if he needs any immediate medical attention. As quickly as possible put him and his wife on the Israeli plane. He added that an Israeli official would be contacting me. A half-hour later my secretary came in and told me there was a gentleman there to see me on an urgent matter. I thought, boy Israeli intelligence is quick. He told me he was in Frankfurt to be helpful and to coordinate the arrangements. That was one part of the operation.

Library of Congress

The other part was that we were trading a bunch of East German and Soviet spies who were in German prisons. The East Germans would be brought to Rhine Main Air Base on the morning of the swap. They and a Czech couple, who were coming the day before from the U.S., would be flown to Berlin on a U.S. military plane. The actual exchange would take place at the famous Glienicke Bridge. Our ambassador to East Germany, Frank Meehan, would bring Sharansky to the border in the middle of the bridge and our ambassador in West Germany would receive him on our side and bring him in the same plane to Frankfurt.

The two spies coming out of the United States were husband and wife. They were naturalized American citizens originally from Czechoslovakia. They both had worked for the CIA and were caught spying for the Soviet Union. The husband had been convicted and the Agency was convinced his wife was also involved, but they didn't pursue the case against her. The idea was that they would come to Frankfurt and be kept under guard at the air force base until we flew them to Berlin. We were going to use the air force hotel on base to put them up, but the U.S. Marshals Service didn't feel that was secure enough. So they put them in the drunk's tank at the MP station. The wife arrived in a mink coat and was incensed to have to spend the night in a metal-lined jail cell. It had been agreed beforehand that a consular officer would come over to Rhine-Main and formally witness their renunciation of U.S. citizenship before we made the swap.

Fortunately, the one thing you learn in our business is Murphy's Law. So I called Dick Barkley, the political counselor at the Embassy, and asked him what we should do if they refused to renounce at the last minute. He told me he would get back to me which he did a short time later. He told me that if they refused to renounce their citizenship we should immediately telephone the East German lawyer, Vogel, who was the intermediary in this exchange, and he would make sure they did what they had promised as a condition for their exchange.

Library of Congress

Well, sure enough, she was so angry about her treatment that she said she wasn't going to renounce her citizenship. So the consular officer steps out of the room and says to the sergeant - this is on a military base - he says to the sergeant, "Get me East Berlin on the phone." The sergeant replies that "We don't talk to East Berlin, sir." Well the consul snapped back, "You're talking to East Berlin now." The sergeant got Vogel on the phone and he read the Czech pair the riot act. So they went ahead and renounced their U.S. citizenship. We put them on the plane with the U.S. Marshals and waited for the East German spies who were being exchanged. When the convoy arrived with the East German prisoners, we put them on the plane to Berlin, and the swap took place as planned. Another thing I have learned in our business is that it always pays to be early. Sure enough, Rick arrived with Sharansky an hour early. When I got everybody out there two hours early there was some complaining, but we were ready when Burt and Sharansky arrived and everything went smoothly.

Sharansky turned out to be a remarkable man. We got to chat with him a bit, and he told us that he hadn't known what was happening to him. The Russian guard in Moscow told him to get his stuff together, he was being moved. He had never been a religious Jew, but he had become religious in jail, so he went to get his prayer book. The guard said he could not take it with him. And Sharansky said, "Well, then I'm not going." Now that's courage. That's chutzpah, in the best sense of the word. The guard gave in, and he took it with him. They put him on a plane but they didn't tell him where he was going. When the plane landed, East Berlin looked so much better than Moscow that he thought he was in Sweden. It was not until U.S. Ambassador Frank Meehan went to see him in jail that he knew he was going to freedom in Israel.

But that was the kind of exciting things we got to do in Frankfurt. The hijacked TWA hostages eventually came to Frankfurt and there were a bunch of American senators and German politicians there to make sure they got their picture taken, grandstanding all the way.

Library of Congress

We also got to witness tragedy, as well. When the bombing of the marine barracks in Beirut happened, the 250 bodies were flown there to be identified and then sent home. I was there to receive them together with Marine Commandant General P. X. Kelly. When the wounded were sent to the military hospitals, I went with General Kelly to the Wiesbaden Air Force Hospital to visit the wounded marines.

After General Kelly left I heard that World Airlines was offering free travel to Frankfurt for any of the immediate families of the wounded marines. For us it was a recipe for disaster. Families would fly in to find that loved ones have either died or been shipped out already. The military moved them back to the States as soon as they could. It had all the markings of a public relations disaster, where we would be the “heartless State Department” that didn't take care of these people. I got off a cable to General Kelly and told him it could be a public relations disaster for the State Department and for the Marine Corps. I need a senior marine officer here to set up an office that's going to take care of these families when they come in. The next morning a marine colonel walked in to my office and says, “Mr. Bodde, General Kelly sent me here to report to you. What am I supposed to do?” It was a wonderful response from the marine corps and it worked out fine, but you know how it could have gone wrong. Think of how many times the Department has gotten a black eye from somebody complaining, “They didn't care about my family,” or “They didn't care about me.” You can get those complaints no matter how hard you try.

I must say, my wife, God bless her, got together some of the other consulate wives, and they visited all wounded who were in Frankfurt. Many of the marines were in bad shape. Some of them didn't make it. She thought it might be nice to bring them some cookies. The nurses told her that they might choke on the cookies so she went out and bought up all the German soft candy, Gummibears, that she could find. She'd ask the marines, “Are you a Redskins fan or a Dallas Cowboy fan?” My wife doesn't know anything about football, but anything to get them talking.

Library of Congress

We visited the hospital where General Kelly awarded Purple Hearts right on the spot. He and I went into one room, where there was a marine lying there with all kinds of tubes going into him. He was unable to talk but he made a writing-like motion. Somebody thought that he wanted Kelly's autograph, but marines don't ask the Marine Commandant for autographs. Then the nurse, being smarter than the rest of us, turned his chart over and handed him a pen. And this guy, who is just hanging onto life, scratches out, "Semper Fi." It was one of the most touching things I have ever seen. You know, there's something about marines and I have great respect for them. It was this sort of thing that made the job in Frankfurt so special.

Q: Let's talk about local politics - Hessen politics, and what were we doing, and then we'll talk a bit about the banking, too.

BODDE: Well, the politics in Hessen were interesting. Walter Wallmann, the lord mayor of Frankfurt, was an old friend of mine from my Bonn days. He had been in the Bundestag when the Christian Democrat Party asked him to run for mayor. As Frankfurt was a socialist stronghold he was expected to lose and return to his seat in the federal parliament. To everyone's surprise he won. This was just as we were leaving Bonn, in 1977. So he was lord mayor in Frankfurt when I arrived, which is one of the most powerful political positions in Germany. That was a big break for me because we were on a first name basis and access was automatic. He played a major role in the party and was a confidant of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. He provided me with insights that we couldn't have gotten anywhere else. The state of Hessen was also very important in German politics. Helgor Boerner, the governor, called minister-president in Germany, was a Social Democrat. I had a lot to do with him and his chief of staff because of the large number of troops stationed in Hessen. One time the German forestry chief for Hessen was going to severely limit the annual military exercise "Reforger."

Hessen had had a tough winter and so the forest director for Hessen wanted to put a large part of the wooded area off limits. The ground was soft, which meant that the tanks and

Library of Congress

other vehicles would wreck havoc with the local environment. Well here were hundreds of thousands of troops on the way to Germany where they would pick up their equipment and participate in this huge two-week large maneuver. I rushed over to see the chief of staff and told him that it would be a disaster if we couldn't train in the area the forester wanted to put off limits. The chief of staff was a savvy political guy, and suggested that the V Corps commander take the forester up in a helicopter to survey the area. He was sure they could agree on a compromise over a glass or two of Schnapps. The forester was rightfully worried that the tanks would rip up the soft earth and we could agree to stay away from the most fragile areas.

In fact, the tanks, as usual, did considerable damage. Fortunately the U.S. Army had damage payments down to a science. Behind the tanks came a finance officer in a jeep with cash on hand to pay for the damage. A tank or a Bradley Fighting Vehicle would make a turn onto the narrow village streets and knock off half of the corner of somebody's house, you know, or maybe even damage the Rathaus or city hall. So anyhow, it was interesting politically because you had the local stuff that was important because our presence was so large, but it also played into national politics. The first Red-Green coalition was in Hessen. That is a coalition between the Social Democratic Party, and the Green (environmental) Party. Now there is a Red-Green Coalition running the country in Berlin. So, yes, the politics were interesting.

Q: Were we seeing at that time the Green Party as being more than some kids getting out there jumping around?

BODDE: Well, sure. I like to claim, and I think it's accurate, that the first report ever sent to Washington on the Greens was an airgram I wrote when I was in Bonn. In those days, the Greens began as an anti-nuclear movement. They tried to prevent the shipment of nuclear waste and I wrote a report about the growing strength of the group. Of course, they had become a lot more powerful by the time I came back to Germany in the '80s. By then the Greens were a national party represented in the Bundestag. There has always been a

Library of Congress

split within the Green Party between the fundamentalists or Fundis, who are really radical and do not want to compromise on any issue, and a pragmatic group that is willing to compromise to gain public support and hold power. So there's always great strains in the Green Party. Someone like Joschka Fischer, who's the foreign minister now, is obviously from the pragmatic group. At every party convention, he must defend himself against the charge that he has sold out.

The Greens got their first big boost in U.S. consciousness because one of their early leaders, Petra Kelly, grew up in the United States and spoke fluent English. Petra's mother had married an American military officer. Do you remember when I mentioned that the French would not take you seriously if you didn't speak French? Well Americans tend to overrate any foreign politician who speaks good English. They get much more American media coverage and they are better on TV. So Petra Kelly was given much more prominence in the United States than she had in Germany because of her American accented English. It didn't hurt that she was also a nice-looking young woman. So the American media interviewed Petra Kelly over and over again. Over time she became more and more radical and became one of the leading Fundis. Her live-in companion was a former German general who had become a peacenik. It ended badly. I not sure what happened. It was either a mutual suicide or murder-suicide. Their bodies were not discovered for some time so it was a very gruesome ending. By the time she died she was no longer important in German politics.

The Greens have become significant in German politics for a number of reasons. One is the German proportional representation election system, which means no single party is likely to win enough votes to govern alone. It isn't a winner take all system like here, so once a party gets five per cent of the vote it is represented. The system encourages splinter parties. The five per cent helps ameliorate that somewhat but the large parties almost always need a coalition partner to govern. Secondly, the Greens were the first to realize that environmental issues could be popular and they were able to capture mainstream voters. Now all the political parties in Germany push environmental issues and

Library of Congress

they probably wouldn't have taken them up if the Greens hadn't forced them to. Much in the way that Ralph Nader has pushed American politics in certain directions. The Greens also appeal to the romantic streak in the German character. I mean, the Germans are attracted by romantic idealism. It is a strain running through German political history.

Q: Yes, I've always seen when you see demonstrations in Germany, more than anywhere else, you see people in costumes and all.

BODDE: Well that's becoming popular here now, too. Look at the World Trade Organization demonstrations in Seattle.

Q: But this was-

BODDE: In Germany they put on skulls and death masks to represent nuclear victims or whatever. I read the other day, it's now becoming the thing among American radicals. I think the less serious they are, the more the costumes appeal. When we had demonstrations a couple of weeks ago during the World Bank meeting, I read that "A peaceful end to the demonstrations was negotiated by the deputy chief of the Washington police and a woman who was dressed as a tree." That sounds a lot like Germany to me. But, yes, with the Greens, this romantic streak is strong.

The biggest political issue that we had to deal with during my time in Frankfurt was the 1984 deployment of intermediate ballistic missiles into West Germany. The deployment was to counter the introduction of a new class of ballistic missiles by the Soviets. The Soviets did everything possible to forestall the U.S. deployment. They walked out of the arms control talks in Geneva and mounted a gigantic propaganda campaign against the deployment. The German Left, including the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party plus all sorts of anti-establishment political groups, demonstrated against the missiles throughout Germany. There was heightened concern about possible terrorist acts.

Library of Congress

Ironically, it was Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, a Social Democrat, who had originally urged the U.S. to deploy the missiles to counter a new generation of missiles the Soviets were deploying. Schmidt's idea was that the threat of such deployment would be a powerful bargaining chip. If the Soviets went ahead and deployed we would introduce our new missiles. The idea was to get the Soviets to come to the table and be serious about negotiating the removal of all intermediate range missiles. If we were not successful in getting the Soviets to remove their missiles, we would at least be able to counter them with our new missiles and maintain the balance.

That's how it eventually turned out. We were able to negotiate an intermediate range ballistic missile treaty and get rid of missiles on both sides. But it was an enormous and divisive issue in Germany. As I said, the Social Democrats and the Greens opposed deployment. There were massive demonstrations every weekend, in Bonn, in Frankfurt, and all over West Germany. The radicals had demonstrated for years against building another runway at the Frankfurt airport. That, too, became a hot issue, and every week they'd go out and confront the police. People would get arrested, and there'd be rock throwing and other violence. But these latest anti-missile demonstrations were nationwide. A large segment of German youth had been radicalized as a result of Vietnam and the student revolutions in France and Germany. The anti-missile movement went beyond the youth and it was a significant political movement supported by a large proportion of the public, at least tacitly. It really took political courage on the part of the Kohl/Genscher government to support the deployment. It would have been popular in Germany if the government told us not to do it. But the Bonn coalition stuck by the original agreement, and Kohl deserves tremendous credit for that. It was the right thing to do.

It was interesting that once the deployment actually began the Soviets backed off completely. They stopped supplying funds and other support to the demonstrations. The demonstrations stopped. The Russians came back to the table and they started

Library of Congress

to seriously negotiate and within a reasonable amount of time negotiated a ban on all intermediate range missiles. But in the beginning it was not a sure thing.

Q: What was your impression of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) in your local context at that time?

BODDE: Well, both local and national. Well, I would say - we talked about this earlier because you had asked about Ostpolitik and Brandt — Washington, in general, preferred the CDU to the SPD (Social Democratic Party). The CDU and its Bavarian sister party, the CSU (Christian Social Union), are conservative and more in tune with the Republicans and the so-called new Democrats. On social issues all the parties in Germany are to the left of the American parties, even the German conservative parties. For example, the CDU is not as conservative as the right wing of the Republican Party in the United States. In fact, basically, probably moderate Republicans would be the natural partners of the CDU. Of course, the Germans are smart. They do business with whichever party is in power in America. Kohl developed a close relationship with Clinton, and he had a good relationship with Reagan. The huge financial scandal that's recently come to light has tarnished Kohl's reputation. He most likely will not run again for the Bundestag, and he could even be prosecuted in Germany. I didn't have a clue about that. Everybody knew that every once in a while there was a scandal about party funding in Germany just as there is in the U.S. It was just bound to happen. In Germany most candidates are professional politicians. You make your career within the party. You start out in the local party organization and move up. It is rare when a candidate is chosen who has had a career in business or the professions.

Q: Because you're put on the list.

BODDE: You're put on the party election list, and you spend your whole career within the party organization. Oh, yes, I was talking about the German electoral system. The New Zealanders, for some unexplainable reason, have decided to take over the German

Library of Congress

election system in New Zealand. The ambassador in Washington had been prime minister when this happened and I asked him why New Zealand had chosen one of the most complicated election systems in the world. He told me the voters were unhappy and they just wanted change for change's sake. It is so complicated that hardly anybody understands it. I remember that U.S. Ambassador Marty Hillenbrand, who was the ultimate German specialist, raised the system once at a staff meeting in Bonn. Well, the political counselor tried to explain it, and I added my two bits, and by the time we were done, there wasn't anybody in the room who wasn't confused. Some candidates are elected from the lists, and some candidates are directly elected, and the apportionment of the votes becomes very complicated. As I said the system makes the large parties hostage to small parties, because you're rarely going to have a single party obtain a majority.

In Germany politicians make their careers entirely within the party. That's what they do for a living. We, too, have professional politicians such as Al Gore or Bill Clinton who haven't done anything else with their lives but politics. But we don't have a whole class of people spending their life doing that. The Germans don't draft outsiders to be candidates. They don't pick academicians or bankers. In Germany, academicians stay in the academic world, businessmen stay in the business world, and politicians stay in the political world. There's no revolving door and they suffer from it. You know, we always complain of the ethics of the revolving door, but it makes for new blood and it brings in other experiences. I think it's a good thing, by and large.

Q: Well, now, on the other side, Frankfurt is the big banking center. But I would have thought that because it's such a worldwide banking center, this would almost be the province of the economic section of the embassy.

BODDE: Well, they thought it was. [Laughter] Of course it was. In Paris and Bonn we have Treasury representatives in the embassy. Usually it's a two-man section and most often the second man is an FSO. When I was in Bonn in the mid-1970s, the Treasury man had been there for years. He later retired in Germany. I think he might have been born in

Library of Congress

Germany. Nobody is more jealous of their prerogatives than the Treasury representatives in an embassy.

Q: *Oh, yes.*

BODDE: Mere mortals are not allowed to compete with what the Treasury Department is reporting. So there was always a tension between the Treasury rep in Bonn and the consulate general in Frankfurt. For instance, the president of the Bundesbank would not receive the Treasury rep from Bonn. He'd meet with Arthur Burns or other U.S. ambassadors, but he didn't think he had to deal with anybody below the ambassador. I doubt if Allan Greenspan meets with many ambassadors. However, he would come to the consul general's house for dinner and that really bothered the Treasury rep. That said, the Treasury representative, when I was in Frankfurt, was first rate. He is now a senior banker with a German bank in New York City. Can you imagine going to a staff meeting every week and explaining the German economy to Arthur Burns? I mean, you've really got to know your stuff. As I said, Burns didn't suffer fools gladly, and he certainly didn't suffer people pretending to know something they didn't. But sure, there were tensions. Once in a while I would encourage a junior officer to do economic reporting. They would report something on the banks, and Boom, the Embassy would slap our wrist. But, of course, Frankfurt is a banking city, so I spent a lot of time with bankers.

When I got there and I looked around at the territory — remember that song in *The Music Man*, “You Got To Know The Territory?” — it was clear that the name of the game was banking. Back when I was preparing to go out to the Pacific islands, most of the published material about the islands was anthropological. You know - Margaret Mead, Malinowski, etc. So I read a lot of anthropology, and spent a lot of time with anthropologists at the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii. Well, when I looked at the Frankfurt bankers they seemed to me to be a lot like a tribe. So I thought that it might be useful to take an anthropological approach to understanding them.

Library of Congress

Of course, you have to know something about economics and finance but I had taken some good economic courses at SAIS. Anyhow, the banking tribe had their own taboos, status and class, and a well-defined hierarchy. This anthropological approach worked quite well. Bankers used to say, "Bill, I never met somebody outside the business that knows as much as you do about it." I didn't know that much about it, but I could understand what was going on. And it was fascinating, because it was there that I got the first clues about globalization. It wasn't yet called globalization but that is what it was. In Frankfurt billions of dollars were moving back and forth without any recognition of national borders and governments. It was a whole different world.

I also learned the first law of banking. One day I was talking to the head of the foreign exchange operations of one of the major banks. I asked him, half in jest, "Well, what's the dollar going to do tomorrow?" He grinned and said, "Bill, it doesn't matter to us as long as it moves." And I realized that's what it's about. It's about taking advantage of financial movements. It doesn't matter whether the dollar is going up or down as long as you are right about the direction or at least hedge against being wrong. These guys were making their money on movement, just as banks make money on the float. The bankers were interesting people to deal with. Most of the German bankers had lived abroad and the American bankers that were there were first-rate.

We were talking about terrorism before. The bankers were also targets of the Red Army Faction. I remember my security people telling me that nobody can guarantee that they can protect you one hundred percent. In fact, if they really want to get you, they can get you. After all, they have killed American presidents, you know. What good security can do is to make it difficult enough so that the terrorists choose an easier target. Two weeks after we left Germany, the Red Army Faction killed the president of Deutsche Bank, the biggest German bank. They set off a bomb by remote control when he was driving to work. He had an armored car and a follow-on car, but they still got him. If they really decide you are the target, and they're willing to do whatever it takes, they can do it! At the counter terrorism

Library of Congress

course they tell you to vary your routine and never take the same road to work every day. I lived in a cul de sac so what were we supposed to do?

Q: I know what you mean. I was told, as I drove my own car in Saigon, where I was consul general, and they had all these things, but the problem was there was one-way traffic, and what the hell are you going to do, you know?

BODDE: Vary your working hours. Sure. I could work from two or four in the morning.

Q: Yes, sure.

BODDE: The consulate was a public business. That's when the consul general has to be there, right? You can vary it a little bit, but basically you have little flexibility. I had a wonderful driver and an armored car and all that kind of stuff, but he was very German, and set in his ways. Getting him to change routes was the triumph of hope over experience. I could get the terrorists to change before I would have gotten him to change.

Q: Well, Bill, is there anything more? Have we kind of brought it up to where the other thing is, now?

BODDE: I think we have. I haven't edited the last part. I'm still on the part before the addendum. Editing directly on the computer is much better and I will give you a complete edited version. Of course you will want to check it.

Q: Unless, you know, there may be other subjects of cultural, academic, what have you? You know, I'm just... whatever you think of. And that sort of brings us up to where the other part picks up, doesn't it?

BODDE: I think so. That's when I came back to be Deputy Assistant Secretary and work for Roz Ridgway in EUR. I don't think I mentioned how that happened. Bill Woessner, who had been DCM in Bonn and then was DAS in EUR, visited Frankfurt. Just before he arrived I found out from a friend at the embassy that Bill was going to retire. When he

Library of Congress

came I asked him who was going to take his place and he said that it had not yet been decided and I told him I was interested. He called Roz, and she told him that she had already decided to ask me. Then Roz called and I said yes, although I had just extended for an additional year in Frankfurt. Ingrid was not wild about the decision because in Frankfurt she had a real role to play. I mean, being Consul General Frankfurt is like being an ambassador. It's better than being an ambassador in many ways. I just learned the other day that there are three posts that are considered by the Department to be ambassador-level.

Q: São Paulo, Frankfurt, and...

BODDE: Frankfurt and Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Q: Well, Taiwan, definitely, but São Paulo is all...

BODDE: It may well be, too. It's funny because when I was first assigned to Germany in 1971 she had her doubts about going back to her country of birth. You know, she was an American now, and she had made that leap of faith to become completely acculturated; something that is rare among the foreign born wives in the Foreign Service. Just before we left for Germany we were having dinner at the Swedish DCM's house, and he had invited the Israeli DCM, who was going as ambassador to Sweden. It turned out he had been born in Berlin. He told Ingrid don't worry because you are going to love it. You'll understand everything that's going on, and yet you won't be emotionally involved in it. She found that she could understand everything that was going on, but that she was seeing through American eyes. As I mention before, she had been president of the International Women's Club in Frankfurt, which was like running the UN. Americans join clubs because they like the activities or for the prestige. Germans join so that they can get together with their clique and keep other Germans out. Now that may be an exaggeration, but if so, it is only a slight exaggeration. She used to get 25 phone calls a day from intermediaries that Frau X was unhappy or Frau Y was unhappy, yada yada yada. She would tell them

Library of Congress

"Have her call me herself if she is not happy." No, the whole thing was Byzantine. She did a tremendous job and she really enjoyed Frankfurt. We had a lovely house, and we had found a gourmet chef. We served much better food than was served at the ambassador's residence in Bonn because of this fantastic chef. I got her into the master's school after she worked for us. There were 38 students and only 20 graduated. She was the only woman in the class and she graduated number one. So not only did we live very well but we could host fabulous dinners at home for a tenth of what it would cost in a first-class Frankfurt restaurant. So life was very good.

The job as DAS was great for me but not so much fun for Ingrid. I worked twelve hours a day and loved it while she sat at home bored. It took her about a year to find herself. She became a volunteer in the emergency room at Suburban Hospital, which she found very rewarding. But no, it was not an easy move. People ask - mostly non-Foreign Service people - "What was your favorite post?" I can't say because they were all so different. Do you have a favorite post?

Q: Well, in a way, Belgrade, but other ones were more interesting. Yes, I do have a favorite post. But I certainly enjoyed them all, and each one's an adventure. It's a learning experience.

BODDE: I found them all a learning experience. Maybe it's the lack of intellectual rigor or something, but I was never bored. I remember when Harvey Feldman was going to Papua New Guinea and people saying, "Poor Harvey, he's going to be so bored out there." Well, I wouldn't be bored. There's always stuff to do - particularly in Papua New Guinea, which is fascinating. I found every post interesting. The Marshalls were probably the least attractive, but even there we had some nice times and it was not boring. So I would find it hard to name my favorite post. Maybe setting up and running the APEC Secretariat in Singapore was the best but I am not sure. It's a great life.

Q: Oh, it's a great life. All right. Well, we'll stop here.

Library of Congress

It's the 3rd of December, 1998. Bill, you have some more to add about Germany in this. We're talking about 'eighty - you were there from - ?

BODDE: '86 to '89.

Q: '86 to '89.

BODDE: And I left EUR in the summer of '89 and on November 9, 1989 the Wall came down. We knew that fundamental shifts were taking place but nobody expected things to happen so quickly and so peacefully. In every Secretary of State's tenure one or two of the assistant secretaries are more influential than the others. This is usually the result of what issues the Secretary chooses, or is forced to choose, to focus on. There is also the factor of personal chemistry. In George Shultz's time EUR's Roz Ridgway was the most influential assistant secretary. When I was in the East Asian Bureau, Dick Holbrooke was the most influential assistant secretary. On their particular issues those assistant secretaries report directly to the Secretary. In Roz's time, Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs Mike Armacost focused on Asia and other areas. The number-two man in the Department, Deputy Secretary John Whitehead, was a figurehead who was relegated to marginal issues. When Holbrooke was the East Asia assistant secretary he would go around Deputy Secretary Christopher and go directly to Secretary of State Vance.

Q: *Was there any plan. You know, one always wonders, is there a plan say, if East Germany all of a sudden collapses - I mean, well, anyway, let's talk about this.*

BODDE: Was there a political contingency plan? No, there was none that I was aware of. One of the great structural weaknesses of the State Department is that we rarely do forward planning. Maybe someone in Policy Planning had some scenario in mind should

Library of Congress

the GDR collapse but I never heard of it. Frankly, the idea that the Soviet Union, let alone the GDR, would collapse without riots and bloodshed was unthinkable.

Another institutional failing of the Department is that it makes little or no use of experience or institutional memory. If you are not assigned to a position that is involved, you are not consulted. When you do the job, you're the expert and when you move on, the guy that's doing the job is the expert. I remember seeing things happening in Sweden after I'd left the Swedish desk, and I'd call the new desk officer. I would tell him, "There's a whole bunch of memoranda in the files that address that issue and suggest options for dealing with it. You might want look at them." To my knowledge it was extremely rare for anyone to go back in the files for ideas and was even more rare that people who had worked on the issue earlier were consulted.

It's particularly interesting in the case of German reunification because once Baker came in, he really got rid of almost all the old German hands. Ridgway retired when she wasn't offered an appropriate senior position. All the EUR DAS's moved on to other assignments. The only key player with German experience working on German reunification was Jim Dobbins who had one tour in Germany as Ambassador Rick Burt's DCM. The point man for German reunification was Robert Zoellick, whom Baker had brought over to State from Treasury. The people at the NSC were not very experienced in Germany either. Basically the Bush team followed Germany's lead on the issue. The President made the decision that the U.S. would support Helmut Kohl's aggressive campaign for immediate reunification over the objections of the British and the French. It is not that Bush and NSC Director Scowcroft wanted everything to happen exactly as it did or as quickly as it did, but events moved so fast that they were difficult to control.

Q: I would have thought, you know, the 30 years I was in the Foreign Service, Berlin was always the place where all hell was going to break loose. If World War III was going to start, it was going to start almost predictably by riots in East Berlin and with the Wall, without the Wall, maybe the East German guys wouldn't go, and the thing would sort of

Library of Congress

spread. I mean, if there was a riot in East Berlin and West German civilians coming in to help, or anything like that. Was there a thought about this?

BODDE: I'm sure there were military contingency plans if the East Germans or Soviets invaded Berlin or West Germany but I don't think there was much beyond that. Politically we had no plan, because no one expected the Soviet Bloc to collapse. At best we thought that over time there might be some sort of accommodation between East Germany and West Germany. Many Europeans had their doubts about the wisdom of a reunified Germany in any event. They feared that a united Germany would eventually dominate Europe. In fact, I remember one of the Italian prime ministers quipped that he loved Germany so much that he was happy that there were two of them. So a lot of people, including many American liberals in and out of Congress, would have been happy to see Germany divided forever.

When all of a sudden the Communist system fell apart, most people on both sides of the Wall were caught by surprise. Gorbachev deserves credit for ruling out Soviet military intervention to maintain the status quo in East Germany. That was the kiss of death for the GDR regime. Eventually, Gorbachev made three important concessions. First, he agreed that East Germany could be united with West Germany if the East Germans voted in free elections to do so. He also agreed that Soviet troops would be removed from East German soil if the West Germans would help pay the costs of the relocation. Finally, he agreed that an united Germany could be a member of NATO. German Foreign Minister Genscher would have accepted an arrangement that in exchange for the removal of Soviet troops the East German part of a reunited Germany would not be part of NATO. Well, things moved very quickly, and Kohl was out in front of everybody. To his credit he realized that the window of opportunity might be very small and Gorbachev's ability to deliver on his part of the deal might not survive the growing turmoil in Russia.

I think the view of the State Department was that the U.S. should support whatever Kohl wanted. Although this position may not have been thought out very clearly, it turned out

Library of Congress

to be the right thing to do. It was very frustrating for the Department's German mafia. You spend your professional life working on an area, and then the most important thing in its history comes along, and you're not involved.

When I was DAS, Germany was only part of my responsibilities as deputy assistant secretary for European and Canadian affairs. Being in charge of Western Europe also meant dealing with France, and that was not always easy. I used to say that one thing you could be certain of when you dealt with France. The French will always take the position they believe will maximize their interest. The French Government is not swayed by friendship or sentimentality, at least when it comes to dealing with foreign governments. De Gaulle is reputed to have said that nations do not have friends, nations have interests. So if you can figure out which position is consistent with French national interest, that's where they're at. They are less concerned about world opinion or what others think of them. Fortunately, French interests and U.S. interests coincide on many important issues. But they can be difficult and ruthless.

Up until recently the French have manipulated the Germans in the European Union so that the Germans agreed to pay the lion's share of the EU expenses while France called the shots on EU policy. For example, seventy percent of the EU budget subsidizes French agriculture with Germany paying most of it. But now that Kohl is no longer in power and Mitterrand is dead, the close relationship between Germany and France may be coming apart. The present German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder feels closer to the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair than he does to French President Jacques Chirac.

Q: We're talking about a socialist government that's just recently come into Germany, one where there's no longer the World War II taint, you might say, and it's sort of looking at things in a different light, and the French can't play on their guilt or something like that.

BODDE: The new Red Green coalition got off to a rocky start but I think Schroeder was right to stare down the French. This is a new German generation and they refuse to carry

Library of Congress

the sense of collective guilt their elders did. Last week a well-known German writer gave a speech in which he said no one should, particularly no German should, ever diminish the Holocaust, but the Holocaust can't be used as blackmail. He has a point because it is often used as blackmail to keep the Germans in line. The Holocaust was a terrible thing and the world should never forget it, but it wasn't the only terrible thing that happened in World War II. It is estimated that 60 million people died in W.W.II. Younger Germans are starting to ask how long? They are not willing to accept the personal responsibility for the guilt of their parents and grandparents. They say, "I wasn't there, I wasn't even alive then, I didn't do anything." Just as most Americans living today didn't kill any Indians in America or starve out the Chinese workers working on the railroad. I mean, it's a terrible part of our history, and I accept it, but I can't take personal responsibility for it.

But German and French issues were not the only interesting issues we had when I worked as EUR DAS. We had important base negotiations in Spain and Portugal. That's how I got to know Ed Rowell, because he was ambassador in Portugal at the time. The difficulty with Portugal was that we had not lived up to treaty commitments because we didn't get the funding from Congress. The Spanish base negotiations were very complicated and involved moving a U.S. Air Force wing out of Spain. But one of the more intriguing things I had to deal with was the Vatican. Our relations with the Holy See were based on the principle that the Vatican was a state to which we had state to state relations. Relations were not between the Roman Catholic religion and the United States. This policy was sometimes hard to enforce because our Ambassador, Frank Shakespeare, would mix up the two. For example, he disobeyed the Secretary of State's instructions and accompanied the Pope on a pastoral visit to the U.S. Someone who knew the situation well once said, "Frank didn't want to be ambassador; he really wanted to be a cardinal."

Q: I know. It's usually sort of a giveaway to some Catholic, isn't it?

BODDE: Actually, up until Claire Booth Luce was appointed ambassador by Eisenhower, the policy was that only non-Catholics should be appointed. There was lots of controversy

Library of Congress

when the job was upgraded to ambassador and even in the mid-1980s the Department still got critical mail from Protestant groups about having a mission to the Holy See. For some reason we have had a number of loose cannons as ambassadors to the Holy See. Some got wrapped up in Catholic politics, others thought they were appointed ambassador to all the Catholic countries and all of them have tense relations with the resident U.S. ambassador to Italy. Shakespeare, a political appointee, had been ambassador in Portugal. At various times he had also been the head of Columbia Broadcasting System, and director of USIA. He was a darling of the Republican Party right wing and Shultz had to put up with him. As I said, he defied the Secretary and insisted on traveling around the country with the Pope and he ministered to the flock. It drove Shultz crazy, but to be perfectly honest, every Administration and every President also tries to wrap themselves in the robe of the Pope for political purposes. Presidents usually invite the Pope to stay at the White House when he is in the U.S., and the Pope always graciously refuses. The Vatican diplomats are very skilled.

Cardinal Casaroli was secretary of state of the Vatican and in many ways he was like a career DCM working for a political ambassador. He ran the day to day operations of the Vatican. Frank Meehan told me when he called on Casaroli, when Frank was ambassador in Poland and they talked about the situation in Poland, Casaroli made it clear that he considered himself to be the expert on Poland whoever was Pope. Actually the Cardinal was a very gracious and friendly person. Once when he came on an unofficial visit to Washington, out of courtesy I went to meet him at the airport. He was coming down by private plane from New York. I was there with members of the Vatican Embassy staff. There was a thunder storm, and the plane couldn't land so we had to wait for a while. Sitting next to an American priest who was the DCM at the Vatican mission I teased him about being unable to do anything about the weather even with his special connections. His reply was, "Don't blame me, I'm just in sales." That was a great line.

When Casaroli called on the President I went over to the White House to meet with the President just before their meeting. The President, The Vice President the Deputy

Library of Congress

Secretary of State, the head of the NSC, a note-taker from the NSC, and I were at the pre-meeting. President Bush knew me because I'd traveled with him a few times so he turns to me and said, "Bill, what do I say to this guy? You know all that Catholic stuff." I said, "Well, Mr. President, I'm not sure I know all that Catholic stuff, but I think these are the issues you want to talk to him about." The meeting went well, and in fact, I think Casaroli did stay at the White House - but he wasn't the Pope.

But it was really interesting to deal with the Vatican, because the U.S. did not intimidate them. They looked out for their own interest. For instance, back then we continually pressured the Vatican to recognize Israel. They wouldn't do it because they thought it would undermine the position of the Church in the Arab countries. Now, you can argue that it's right or wrong, but they weren't going to be pushed around by us or anybody else. On the other hand they were very helpful in Polish matters and in the rest of Eastern Europe. Their intelligence system was excellent.

Q: Let's talk a bit more about the French.

BODDE: Yes.

Q: I think the so-called French connection in the United States always seems to be a sort of love-hate thing, that the blood pressure goes up when you mention dealing with the French, yet there's a respect at times and a contempt at times. I mean -

BODDE: It really is a love-hate

Q: While you were dealing with this, in the first place, what were you getting from your French - particularly when you initially arrived in the DAS job, what were you getting?

BODDE: Well, we had a political ambassador in Paris who was quite good. We also insisted on strong DCMs. For example, Avis Bohlen, the daughter of Chip Bohlen, a suburb diplomat in her own right, served as DCM to Mrs. Harriman. The embassy was

Library of Congress

staffed with top-flight officers many of whom were specialists on other parts of the world where the French were engaged. As a result, the political and economic reporting out of Paris was very good. The problem I had - it's the problem anyone has if they don't speak French is that the French do not take you seriously. After all, if you were civilized you would speak fluent French. So I just had to accept that. It was very nice to go to the dinners and other events at the embassy, and so on, but my influence on them probably would have been considerably more if I spoke French. At the same time the French Embassy did not have much influence on policy in Washington. At the same time there was ongoing cooperation with France on such issues as nuclear planning, and there was intelligence sharing. In Africa, where France still is influential, we also cooperated. For instance, Chad was fighting successfully against Libya and we supplied Chad but kept the French informed about what we were doing.

Q: They would join our exercises. I mean in the Mediterranean, really their fleet was almost fully integrated.

BODDE: Yes, because it was in France's interest. They didn't have any problem with this. I always think of when Kennedy sent an emissary, I think it was Acheson, to brief de Gaulle, on our intention to declare a naval blockade of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Q: Yes, he sent Acheson.

BODDE: I'm reading this new biography of Acheson by James Chace, and it's really good. We heard so much about Acheson in the Department. He really was a remarkable man. Anyway, when he went to see de Gaulle and he told him what we were going to do, de Gaulle asked, "Have you come to ask for my approval, or did you come to inform me?" He said, "I've come to inform you." De Gaulle could understand the U.S. position and our determination to look out for U.S. interest close at home. President Bush had a friendly relationship with French Prime Minister Chirac. Bush placed great value on personal relationships. I am sure that there were times when these friendships made a dialogue

Library of Congress

possible, that might have been more strained if not impossible. That said, I believe that it is naïve to think that national leaders put their nation's interests aside because of friendship with a foreign leader.

I remember going to a small dinner in Paris. Chirac was prime minister and leader of the neo-Gaullist party and Mitterrand was president and the leader of the Socialist Party. The French call this arrangement “cohabitation.” Present at the dinner hosted by the Chiracs were the Bushes and his foreign policy advisor, Don Greg and me. Bush was Vice President then. But it was interesting because Chirac was very relaxed and Mrs. Chirac told him to tell a story about the American girlfriend that he had when he was young. Chirac's English was perfect and as you know we always give more credence to a foreign politician who speaks English than to one who does not.

Q: As the French do.

BODDE: Sometimes we overrate them because of their facility in our language. I've seen it in Germany. A politician may not be tremendously influential in his own country but is very articulate in English and we'll treat him as if he's the spokesman for Germany. And I'm sure that's true in France as well. Anyhow, Chirac's wife was saying, “Tell him the honey story, Dear.” This was, I think, a pretty good indication of how relaxed they were with Bush that Chirac would tell the story. It seems that when Chirac was in college he visited the United States. He traveled around the country doing odd jobs and even worked as a soda jerk at one point. He was really proud that he knew the expression, soda jerk. When he was traveling in the South, he fell in love with this southern girl, Honey. Honey was just the sweetest thing ever, he said, and with great difficulty he left her and returned to France. He said he has never forgotten Honey but then, with a certain degree of self-mockery he remarked, “You know, if I had married Honey, I would never have become prime minister of France.”

Library of Congress

The French can be charming but they also can be brutal if they believe their interest is at stake. I came away from my experience working with the French— let me put it this way - with considerable respect but not a lot of affection.

Q: Did the French - now we're talking about some of the other countries you're dealing with - did the French know how to play Congress? I mean this always seems to be one of the real problems with particularly smaller countries. They come and they think if they deal with the State Department, that takes care of it, which is absolutely the wrong thing to do. The State Department can act as a facilitator, but to really get things done, foreign embassies have to play Congress and the press.

BODDE: The French are politically sophisticated and I am sure they must have known the importance of Congress' role. They certainly played Congress. I didn't get the feeling, though, that they were tremendously good at it. The French ambassador used to drive George Shultz crazy. One time after the French had done something, the ambassador saw Shultz at the Kennedy Center and he made a halfhearted apology. Shultz got even angrier. I used to joke that a French apology is an apology that is worse than the original insult.

The German embassy became good at playing Congress but it took them a while to figure it out. When they did they invited senators and congressmen to visit Germany and Berlin. They set up a whole bunch of non-governmental institutions in Washington to promote German-U.S. links. Each of the German political parties has a foundation funded by public funds and they all have an office in Washington. Those offices act as quasi embassies. The Germans also set up the German Marshall Fund in Washington which funds many projects in the U.S. and abroad. They also established think tanks and research organizations to encourage student exchange and to cultivate interest in Germany among Americans.

Library of Congress

The French didn't do anything on that scale. The Italians cultivated the executive branch and the Hill. In the 1980s The Italian ambassador was very effective. He really knew how to play this town. At the time it was very important for Italian politicians to demonstrate that they had close ties to the U.S. I don't know if this still is the case. As you know there is lot of competition for the President's time. So it was necessary for the ambassador to really work the bureaucracy if he were going to get an appointment at the White House for various Italian politicians. The Italian ambassador knew the system so well that he could literally track a memo from when it was drafted by the desk officer all the way through the system. He kept in touch with the desk officer, the country director and the DAS. He knew that the DAS was his key to success. Above the DAS officials were too busy to devote much time to Italy and below the DAS they did not have enough influence. He treated me as a special friend. Of course, the day I left the DAS job, I never heard from him again. You have to accept that is the way the game is played.

Italian politicians of any importance felt that if they came to Washington they had to meet with the President. A photo op with the President really meant something back in Italy. I don't think it matters that much in France. But in Italy, a picture with the President was political capital. I remember one time when the Italian Socialist leader Craxi visited Washington and we could only arrange for a fifteen-minute courtesy call on the President. Craxi saw the President for maybe 15 minutes and had his picture taken. After he left the oval office he asked if he could sit down and have a drink of water for he felt a little faint. So he sat down in the anteroom of the oval office for another 15 minutes slowly sipping his water. Outside there were 50 Italian TV cameramen and reporters who thought that Craxi was discussing world events with the President all this time. Then Craxi went outside to the oval driveway in front of the official entrance to the West Wing where flanked by two marine guards he holds a thirty minute press conference with the White House as the backdrop. Of course, he is holding up others who have appointments with the President. The White House staff is going berserk because they have a schedule to keep. Only an Italian politician could turn a fifteen-minute photo op into a state visit! An invitation to the

Library of Congress

Italian ambassador's dinners was one of the most sought after invitations in Washington. I met the who's who of Washington politics at those dinners.

Q: And they also had a resident group of people, many of whom were quite significant who had an i at the end of their names. In other words, they were the Italian-Americans, and boy, in Congress...

BODDE: You know the amazing thing to me was how insecure the Italian-Americans were about their place in American political life. I'll never forget - I went to a gala dinner at the residence and the guest of honor was New York Governor Mario Cuomo. I was at the head table with the ambassador, the governor, and Senator Leahy from Vermont, whose mother is Italian-American. Agnelli, the owner of Fiat, was also at the table. I was surprised to hear them complain about how unappreciated Italians were in America. It was unbelievable how insecure they were: "Why don't we have an Italian in the cabinet?" "Why don't we have more representation at the highest levels of government?" I understood that the whole mafia image was an insult. I mean, they hated that, and I would too, if I were Italian. But I mean, here were some of the most distinguished people in America; you'd think they'd just sit back and relax. Instead they spent the evening complaining that Italians were not treated right in American society.

I had a nice talk with Governor Cuomo, who was very friendly. I mentioned to him that I was born in Brooklyn and that my mother could never understand why I hadn't taken a steady job with the Brooklyn Union Gas Company. She could not understand why I would move far away to Washington. The governor laughed and said he could sympathize with me.

He said that his mother and father came from Italy and owned a grocery store in New York City. When he first decided to run for political office, he went to see them to get their blessings. To make them feel better, he explained that if he were really successful in politics he might someday become a judge. They were pleased because a judge was held

Library of Congress

in high regard in Italy. Many years later, after his father died, he was elected governor of New York State and invited his mother to his inauguration. After the ceremony, he hugged his mother, and asked, "Well, what do you think of your little boy Mario now, Mama?" She said, "Mario, this is the proudest day in my life. I am so excited and I wish your father could be here. But, Mario, when are you going to become a judge?"

I don't think the United States public gives Italy the recognition and respect it deserves. Italy has been a loyal friend and ally.

The Portuguese were as terrible at playing Washington as the Italians were good at it. The Portuguese ambassador thought he should be doing all his business with the Secretary of State. You and I know that the Secretary of State is not going to spend a lot of time with ambassadors. We had to intervene in Congress on Portuguese behalf. Under instructions from Secretary Shultz I went to see the Democratic congressman, Tony Coelho, who was of Portuguese descent and a powerhouse in Congress.

Anyhow, the U.S. was committed to provide military assistance programs to Portugal in exchange for the right to use the Azores. The Azores is important as a transshipment base to the Middle East but Congress would not appropriate the funds. We simply weren't keeping our part of the bargain. Congressman Coelho put together a small group of sympathetic congressmen to see what they could do to help. A sort of "friends of Portugal" group. I went up on the Hill and briefed them on the situation.

Finally the Portuguese figured it out that they needed friends in Congress and they began to work with him. The next time the prime minister visited Washington he awarded Coelho a medal of appreciation. They also realized that Frank Carlucci, the former ambassador to Lisbon and later secretary of defense was a true friend of Portugal. He was well thought of in Portugal. When Frank Carlucci was ambassador the communists were temporarily in control. Kissinger was prepared to write off Spain and Portugal as hopeless. To his ever-lasting credit, Carlucci stood up to Kissinger and called for support of the

Library of Congress

Portuguese Socialist Party that eventually triumphed over the communists. The German Social Democrats also deserve great credit for their financial and political support of the democratic left in Portugal and Spain. Without the German support the democracy in both countries might have failed.

Q: I think it's one of the great stories of the Foreign Service. I have an interview with Frank on it, and we talked quite a bit about this at the time; and others have alluded to this.

BODDE: Yes, it's one of those times they are wrong when they say diplomats don't matter any more. Critics claim that ambassadors are just messenger boys. Well, Frank was a lot more than a messenger. He is a good role model for Foreign Service Officers when they become ambassadors, because, there may come a time when you are tested and you have to stand up for what is right. Back in the Kennedy days - you may remember - he was desk officer for the Congo. Anyhow, the head of state came to Washington on an official visit and Kennedy gave a lunch for him. When he came to the lunch he turned to Kennedy and asked, "Where's Carlucci?" And Kennedy allegedly said, "What's a Carlucci?" Well, they found Frank over at the State Department and they quickly brought him to the lunch. So even as a junior officer Frank made an impression.

It was a wonderful time in EUR in those days. We had a powerful and very competent assistant secretary, Roz Ridgway. The Secretary had great confidence in her, so that gave her great access to the Secretary. And as you know, when your boss has access, the bureau has access.

Q: What were her interests, and how did she operate?

BODDE: Roz had always been an exceptional Foreign Service Officer. She was a straight shooter and she motivated and inspired the people who worked for her. I don't think the morale in EUR has ever been higher than it was under her leadership. She had been ambassador to Finland and was named counselor of the Department in the Carter Administration. So when the Republicans came in they thought of her as a Democrat

Library of Congress

appointee. In reality, Roz represented the best of the career professionals. She was sent as ambassador to East Germany where she served with distinction. When Shultz was seeking a new EUR assistant secretary to replace Rick Burt who was going to Bonn as ambassador, he interviewed Roz. He didn't know her when he chose her but she soon gained his confidence and in some ways she was like a daughter to him. She became one of his most trusted assistant secretaries because she proved herself over and over. The first time was when the Soviets arrested an American newsman in Moscow. It was during a UN General Assembly session and she and the Secretary were up in New York. It was a serious crisis and she helped Shultz work it out. That experience bonded the two of them. Her main interests were arms control with the Soviets and NATO issues. She had worked in RPM/EUR early in her career. In EUR, in those days, the three jewels in the bureau crown were RPM (Regional Political-Military Affairs), which was the office dealing with NATO and arms control issues, the Soviet desk, and the German desk. She accompanied Secretary Shultz to all the summits with the Soviets, the NATO meetings and the G7 economic summits. My two DAS colleagues, Charlie Thomas and Tom Simon, who respectively dealt with political-military issues and the Soviet Union, usually went with them so I got to be acting assistant secretary a lot

Q: In a way, I'm sure it rankled in Western Europe at that time, but I mean, really, Britain, West Germany to some extent, or France, Italy, Spain and all, were really the second rung.

BODDE: Yes, well, the only thing that helped was that there was an assistant secretary-level quadripartite group that included the Germans, the French, the British and the U.S. to coordinate policy. It was kept hush hush so as to not to offend the Italians and other friendly countries who were not members. This core group was instrumental in reaching agreement on common approaches to negotiating with the Soviet Union

It has gotten worse since the end of the Cold War. In those days congressmen would visit Germany regularly. But basically, the Secretary of State had to devote most of his time

Library of Congress

and energies to keeping the NATO Alliance strong and unified, and negotiating with the Soviet Union on arms control. Roz's job and mine was to keep Germany and France in the loop, if possible. But you're right, there was unhappiness among the British and the Germans at not being at the head table any longer. With the Brits, it went back to a post-war speech by Acheson stating that it was clear that the Empire was finished and that the United Kingdom was no longer a world power. It had become a secondary power. That's why they've always pushed the special relationship between the UK and the U.S., because they needed it to boost their position in the world.

Q: Did Britain fall in your bailiwick?

BODDE: No. Jim Wilkinson did Britain, Scandinavia, Benelux, the EU and Greece and Turkey.

Q: You must have been delighted not to have Greece and Turkey in your-

BODDE: Oh, yes. You can never please either side. You certainly can never keep the Greeks happy and they are an important political lobby in the U.S. What involvement I did have with Britain concerned the British role in Berlin. We always worried when Thatcher would meet alone with President Reagan. He admired her so much and she was so forceful that he might give away the store. The two people we didn't want alone with the President were Margaret Thatcher and Brian Mulroney, the Canadian prime minister because he liked them so much it colored his judgment. On the other hand, there were times when we depended upon Thatcher to stiffen Reagan's resolve at international meetings.

Unfortunately, she stayed on the political stage too long. European integration moved ahead and she was stuck in the past. Her closest aide was my old friend from Bonn days, Charles Powell. General Scowcroft, NSC director in the Bush Administration, considered him his opposite number. When we both did internal German affairs in Bonn, he would show me some of the reports he sent to London and I showed him mine. Although we

Library of Congress

were not necessarily talking to the same people, our analysis was almost identical. He joked, "You know, one of us ought to work half the year for both embassies, and the other work the other half. That way we could each take a half year off" He went on to great things, and he was knighted when Thatcher left office.

As I said, Roz Ridgway was one of Secretary Shultz's key advisors on arms control negotiations with the Soviets and NATO issues. On arms control there was an ongoing battle for the soul of the Reagan Administration between Weinberger and Shultz. Secretary of Defense Weinberger and his key arms control deputy, Richard Perle, didn't want to see any kind of arms control. Shultz and Roz wanted to work out practical agreements with the Soviets. Shultz finally won out but it was a fierce battle. The interagency battle occupied a great amount of Ridgway's and Shultz's energy and time. It wasn't just the difficult negotiations with the Russians they had to deal with, but they had to make sure the agreements didn't get undermined at home. This job was, as far as substance is concerned, the high point of my career. I enjoyed it enormously.

Q: We may have covered this before, but we can edit it out later. The attitude towards the European Community.

BODDE: As I mentioned earlier, in 1966 the Department sent me for a year to the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies to become an Atlanticist. There were a dedicated group of Atlanticists in the State Department. They believed that the U.S. should do everything possible in support of European integration. They argued correctly that integration provided stability in Western Europe and made war between France and Germany impossible. My problem with the policy was not with U.S. support of European integration. My problem was that we seemed to be blind to the likelihood that, over time, a united Europe's economic and trade interests might not be identical with the interests of the U.S. This has proven to be the case and the EU has even rejected decisions by the World Trade Organization instructing the EU to stop taking actions that damaged U.S. exports. During the Cold War it could be argued that the strategic partnership with

Library of Congress

Europe was so important that we should not damage it by aggressively seeking remedies to the EU's unfair trade practices. Those days are gone and although the U.S.-European relationship remains important both politically and economically, we must look out for our own interests. This means letting the Europeans know when they do something that harms our interests.

Q: It wasn't your responsibility, but you were part of the bureau. What was the feeling about Gorbachev during this time? Again, we may have covered this.

BODDE: I don't think we did. Roz held a staff meeting with her deputies every evening at six. At first I thought this was strange because the usual practice was to have staff meetings first thing in the morning. I soon came to realize what a brilliant idea this was. The meetings gave everyone the opportunity to assess where they were at the end of the day and to prepare them for what they had to face the next day. Secondly you could give your boss a heads up on things she should know about and in return you got guidance and support from your boss and your front office colleagues. The meetings were most often everything a meeting should be: substantive, friendly, frank and irreverent. These meetings really served as a catharsis after fighting the bureaucratic battles all day. Your boss and your colleagues heard you out and everyone tried to be mutually supportive. You could bet that Gorbachev was a topic at almost every meeting.

At first we were suspicious of Gorbachev, partially because the Europeans quickly fell in love with him. The German public treated him as a hero and even Margaret Thatcher seemed to be taken in. We were worried that his charm offensive would divide the NATO allies. Gorbachev became a folk hero in Germany long before unification. German Foreign Minister Genscher made a speech at Davos early on saying, "Let's help Gorbachev" and we were concerned. In retrospect, I think there was a lot of wishful thinking about Gorbachev, such as calling him a democrat at heart. In reality he was desperately trying to save the communist system. It turned out that once Gorbachev relaxed the grip of the

Library of Congress

party on the state and the public, things got out of hand quickly and eventually led to the demise of the Soviet Union.

When I was in Poland with Vice President Bush, I asked one of the leaders of “Solidarity” what he thought about Gorbachev's efforts to reform the communist system. He replied that you could make pea soup out of an aquarium but you could not make an aquarium out of pea soup.

At the same time Gorbachev deserves great credit for accepting the peaceful reunification of Germany and providing for a peaceful demise of the USSR. Were he not there I think there would have been bloodshed. Obviously Reagan developed rapport with Gorbachev, their relationship became warmer over time. Then for a while, when Bush came in, the relationship was a little cooler, and then it warmed up again but Gorbachev's days were numbered. I think we professionals in European affairs underestimated him, and the Germans overestimated him.

Q: What was our reading - you'd obviously looked at it before, but during this '86-'89 period - of the role of Genscher? I mean he was for a long time foreign minister.

BODDE: By the time he stepped down he had been the longest serving foreign minister in German history. Hans-Dietrich Genscher was foreign minister a long time. When he took office he didn't speak English, and when he left he was fluent in English. He'd do interviews in English live on CNN at the end of his tenure.

I remember Shultz getting angry with us in the EUR Bureau because we told him that you couldn't trust Genscher. Shultz said that he heard this over and over but he had not experienced any time that Genscher had lied to him or let him down. Genscher was a refugee from East Germany and claimed to despise the communists. We were afraid that he would try to broker an unacceptable arrangement between Germany and Soviet Union that would sell out NATO. Within Germany he was a tremendously skilled politician, who made The Free Democratic Party a national political force. His party was the balancing

Library of Congress

weight in German politics. First it moved to one side and kept the SPD in power. Then it switched sides and formed a coalition government with the conservative CDU/CSU.

Genscher's Free Democratic Party is also called the Liberal Party in Germany. Genscher was just a genius at the game of political manipulation. He turned the foreign ministry into his fiefdom. Nobody held an important ambassadorship or senior job in the foreign ministry unless he/she was a Genscher man. They had to constantly demonstrate their loyalty to Genscher. Still I think, Washington's paranoia about Genscher was overdone.

Q: And of course, later on, not on your watch, Genscher played a problematic role in the Yugoslav situation.

Q: So I mean, there was room to have this underlying concern about where he was coming from.

BODDE: The German preoccupation with Croatia goes back to W.W.II. During the war German relations were close with Croats, who were Catholic and pro-Fascist - as opposed to the Serbs who were not Catholic and not democrats either. It was a conflict between Mikhailovic who led the Croats and Tito who led the Serbs. I know Larry Eagleburger believes that hasty recognition of Croatia helped to break up Yugoslavia and start the war in Bosnia. There's a debate about Genscher's role. You know, I'm still of the old school that says countries look out for their national interests, and that's what they're supposed to do. We don't have a world institution to force its will on sovereign states. I teach a course in international relations at the business school at the University of Hawaii every year, and I tell the students, "I'm sorry, but the world isn't like Stevie Wonder singing 'We Are the World.'" Countries first and foremost look out for their interests, and Genscher was looking out for Germany's interest as he saw it.

Q: Speaking on that subject, looking out for one's interest, did being a superpower, even when the Soviets were around, I mean we had interests all over the world, but was there a problem between what were really American interests, which can be trade and everything

Library of Congress

else - it's almost sometime the economic versus the political - that would show up on your agenda as a DAS?

BODDE: Yes, at times our different interests would be in conflict with each other. For instance, we had a good working relationship with France on defense and nuclear matters. This affected the way we dealt with France on such things as nuclear testing in the Pacific. I remember that the Pacific island states, the Australians and the New Zealand League reached agreement on a South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone called "spin fiz." When they negotiated the agreement, the Australians were very careful to consult with us. They were confident that they had structured the treaty so that it would be acceptable to the United States. We still could not sign it because we did not want to cross France, who wanted to continue to test nuclear weapons in the Pacific. Well, this was a case where our interest in getting along with the Pacific islanders and Australia and New Zealand was in conflict with our interest in getting along with France.

You also had the problem of national interest conflicting with human rights supporters both in and outside the United States. It started in the Carter Administration. There are those who believe that spreading American values is at least as important or more important than protecting American political or economic interests. Therefore we sometimes pushed a human rights agenda even when it complicated normal political relations, based on mutual interests. This has become more pronounced since the end of the Cold War but the two continue to be competing interests. Just look at the battle over granting China permanent normal trading relations and helping the PRC join the World Trade Organization.

Q: Well, often, did you find in your time — again we're talking about the '86-89 period — that essentially American internal politics raised its head, where our leaders had to take a posture to show that they were on one side or another of an issue when it was really something we preferred not to take a side from the international point of view?

Library of Congress

BODDE: Not too much at that time, because the Cold War was the decisive factor in shaping the policy and the environment. Sometimes domestic political interests got in the way of our foreign policy interests. Obviously, when you get into the Greek/Turkey issues or anything that might put you crossways with Israel, you're going to run into domestic political pressure.

We ran into trouble with the Germans when they got upset about us supplying Israel through Germany. That is, that we used U.S. air bases in Germany to reinforce Israel during the last Arab-Israeli war. The German ambassador came in to protest to Deputy Secretary Whitehead. Whitehead really didn't understand these issues very well, and he resented being told by the bureau what he should say about U.S. policy. He felt that as Deputy Secretary he should make policy. So I remember in this particular case, he assured the German ambassador that we'd never do so again without checking with them. Well, that was not our policy. We would do it again if circumstances required it and we weren't going to check with the Germans beforehand. We would just have to live with the fallout afterwards. Fortunately, the German note-taker, a young first secretary, called me after he got back from the meeting and said, "You know, Mr. Whitehead said this, and I just want to make sure I have it right because I don't think that's U.S. policy as I know it." I told him no, Mr. Whitehead's comments did not reflect official U.S. policy. The relationship between the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary have often been strained, and it's rare to see the relationship as close as it was between Marshall and Acheson. I don't think that the ShultWhitehead relationship was that close. He didn't pick Whitehead. Rather, I think Whitehead was foisted on him. I never saw any bad blood between them, but basically Shultz did his thing, and he gave Whitehead Eastern Europe to go out and do some things there, and so on. Almost invariably the Secretary turns to the Deputy Secretary and gives him the thing he doesn't want to do.

Q: Latin America or something.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Or they get involved in the cone system or something and we have problems.

Q: Is there any thought about our engagement in Nicaragua and El Salvador and all that at that time, in terms of the European side that you had to deal with?

BODDE: Not too bad. I mean, I got there just after Ollie North left and after the purge when Carlucci came in. No, Poindexter was there when I got there but not for long. I didn't know anything was going on about trading arms for hostages. But what happened was that in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair they got rid of Poindexter and senior NSC staff and they brought in Colin Powell and Frank Carlucci. There were very few Europeans who felt our policy in Central America was a good policy, but it wasn't the disruptive factor that Vietnam was. Basically, they considered Latin America to be very much in our sphere of influence so that the Europeans didn't see a lot of problems with it. So it didn't create a serious problem that I remember in the European relations.

Q: Turning back to France for a bit, did you get any feeling about how our embassy viewed the French intellectuals who seemed both to be influential in France and to take a pretty solid leftist line?

BODDE: They are part of what they call the political class in France, which consists of intellectuals, bureaucrats and politicians and maybe the top industrialists. I think in my time things in France were actually changing. There came a period of time when they became somewhat more pro-American. I think one of the things that happened is that when Reagan took over he scared the death out of the Europeans. Then it turned out that the Reagan Administration was not as radical as its rhetoric. Many European leaders found Reagan to be a dependable partner and they knew where he stood. He stood for certain things and they could deal with that. Even in France, I think, there was a resurgence of interest in things American. Then most European governments were center-right. Now most governments in Europe are center-left. Even the center-right in Europe, especially in Germany and in France, believes in a strong central government and an extensive social

Library of Congress

net. Just one example, it would be impossible for a German company to use pension funds to restructure or refinance the company. Pension funds are untouchable and if there were a surplus it would be returned to the contributors. I mean, Kohl's party on a lot of issues sounds something like moderate Democrats, maybe even liberal Democrats, more than like Republicans.

Anyhow there were always some tension and problems. An anti-American current runs just below the surface in many European countries. I've had people tell me that Spain is the most anti-American country in Western Europe, because of the Spanish Civil War and America's friendly relations with Franco during the Cold War. I think it was just a given that intellectuals in most countries are going to be leftists, and they were particularly critical of Reagan. He didn't help matters with his "Evil Empire" rhetoric. Of course, the fact that the USSR was an evil empire is beside the fact.

Q: Were there any developments in Spain, or were things just moving along rather nicely as a result?

BODDE: Well, they surely moved along well with Prime Minister Gonz#lez, who was a moderate Socialist. We had the base negotiations on my watch. Reggie Bartholomew was the principal negotiator. Shultz liked him very much, but I thought he was an egregious self-promoter. He was a political appointee during the Carter Administration and somehow got himself career status. Reggie stated over and over again that the crucial issue in the negotiations was the U.S. Air Force wing stationed right in Madrid or just outside of Madrid. According to Reggie, the Spaniards wanted it out and if we agreed to move it the Spanish negotiators would be satisfied. We didn't want to take it out because if we took it back to the United States, they would have to disband it for budget reasons. I remember sitting in the Oval Office with Reagan and Carlucci, and Carlucci explaining that given the budget constraints we would have to take the wing home and disband it. Of course, Reagan never wanted to dismantle anything military and he said, "Oh, that would be

Library of Congress

terrible,” Carlucci said, “Mr. President, we've got a budget agreement and that's a fact of life. If we bring the wing home, we'll have to disband it.”

Well, two things happened. When we eventually agreed to take it out it turned out that Reggie was wrong. The Spanish did exactly what any good negotiator does. They said, well, that's settled, now let's get to these other issues. That wasn't the only issue - it was the toughest issue, but it wasn't the only issue - and in the end we had to make other concessions, too. Here is another case where the Italians did not get credit for being such good allies. The Italian prime minister was in Washington on an official visit and he asked if the Secretary would call on him at the Italian Residence. The prime minister wanted to talk to Shultz aside from the other scheduled meetings.

I accompanied the Secretary and when we got out there, the Italian prime minister said, “We can't pay for it - NATO or the U.S. will have to pay for constructing a base - but we're willing to take that wing in Italy. You can put it in southern Italy where it will contribute to developing this poor region.” So the Italians solved the problem. We moved the wing to Italy, and I'm sure we used the base during the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. Later, Reggie was appointed ambassador to Italy, where he complains that he should have been ambassador to Israel.

But just an aside - you know, the old joke, that when the air force builds a new base, they build the officers' club and the golf course first, and then they build the runways. By God, in the proposal to NATO to fund the building of this base, which had to be built from scratch because there was nothing there, there was a golf course included. They expected NATO to pay for it but the golf course was turned down, at least initially.

Q: Well, did you find the Pentagon was always over there. I mean, it wasn't part of your job, but at the same time it was your job because you were dealing with countries with NATO bases, and there was this relationship, which was not the greatest, between Shultz

Library of Congress

and Weinberger. I mean, did you find yourselves at your level sort of trying to make things work?

BODDE: Sure, and by the way, part of this relationship is difficult because when Shultz was at Bechtel - how do you say it?

Q: Bechtel.

BODDE: Bechtel. He was Weinberger's boss. And when Weinberger became secretary of defense he didn't consider the secretary of state to be his boss. Moreover, he had closer personal ties to Reagan. But the main reason for their difficulties was ideology. They are both conservatives but Weinberger didn't want to have any arms control agreements with the Soviets while Shultz believed you could find areas of common interest with the Soviets on arms control and reach agreement. Weinberger's stock was pretty high in the beginning but Shultz hung in there and in the end prevailed. Weinberger resigned before the end of Reagan's second term and Shultz stayed on to the very end. We tried to work at a level where we could keep it from being an ideological battle. Where I saw the differences between the two departments was when I did the COCOM negotiations with Austria and Switzerland. These negotiations concerned the trade in strategic goods.

Q: And these were prohibited items which would increase the military capability of the Soviets that could get out, so it was quite important.

BODDE: And it became particularly important with the neutral countries. We already had a problem with some of our NATO allies, including the United Kingdom. These allies would, on occasion, sell strategic goods to the Soviets that we believed were banned by COCOM. We were concerned that the neutral countries would become a back door for the Soviets to obtain strategic technology. There was a big case that set things off. I think it was Norway, a NATO ally, that sold some machinery to the Soviets that could be used for

Library of Congress

producing very silent submarines. And the big case, the case that created a great problem, was Norway or Finland and selling-

Q: I think it was Norway. Toshiba?

BODDE: Yes, the Norwegians sold the Soviets some sensitive Toshiba machinery.

Q: Toshiba turbines for submarines.

BODDE: Right, Norway was selling precision machines to make the turbines. Things got very political when an American congressman was photographed smashing Toshiba radios to demonstrate her anger with the sale. That really caught the Europeans' attention. Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words. My first negotiation was with the Austrians. The man in charge in Vienna was an old friend of mine from my assignment there in the 1960s. Now he was in charge of the economic section of the foreign ministry. At first the Austrian position was hard. They said that their neutral status prevented them from agreeing to U.S. export controls over goods that Austria was transshipping to a second country. By the time I got involved, they'd come around considerably, and they recognized two things. One is if they wanted to be a major player as a source of technology, they had to maintain good economic and trade relations with the United States. Secondly, if Austria got a reputation for being sleazy, it would hurt the country in other areas as well. So eventually they came around to our position.

Within our delegation there was always tension between the Commerce Department and the State Department on one side, who believed that you could sell some so-called dual use technology, especially stuff that was not cutting edge. The Department of Defense was on the other side who thought everything was dual use and one should not sell the bastards a shovel. It could be used to dig a foxhole, you know. And I remember at one point there was a toy - Teddy Ruxpin, a talking teddy bear. Because the chip in this talking

Library of Congress

bear was on the list, it could not be sold to the Soviets. We looked ridiculous because anybody could go to Toys-R-Us and buy the toy.

Certainly there was an on-going effort by the Soviets to get their hands on American technology. I remember there was a Soviet ballet company - not the Bolshoi but another group. Customs caught them trying to take all kinds of banned personal computers back to the Soviet Union. I could see these petit ballerinas trying to hide a PC in their tutus. The over conservative view of the DOD was a problem and it reflected the views of Weinberger and his deputy, Richard Perle, who was known as the "prince of darkness." Perle and his protégé, Steve Bryan are still nostalgic for the Cold War.

One other problem we had with Defense went back to the time when Roz was ambassador to East Germany. While there she was trying to figure out, as all good ambassadors do, was there any area of relationship that we could make something happen that we wanted to happen. At that time, there were Jewish claims against East Germany and the East German Government was stonewalling the Jews. Basically what had happened was that after the war the West Germans owned up to the Holocaust and the East Germans did not. According to the East Germans, all the Nazis were West Germans. Of course, this wasn't true. In the post-war years anti-Semitism was much greater in East Germany than in the West. Anyhow, Roz came up with the idea of a package. We would reduce the tariffs on East German exports to the U.S. on goods that were not produced in the U.S. and they would simultaneously make a payment of \$100 million to the Jewish claimants. When I became a DAS, I spent about three years on this project, which was close to Roz's heart, but I was not successful. I spent a lot of time trying to sell the idea around town. I went to the U.S. Trade Representative's office. I went up to the House and Senate and I went to Commerce and the Defense Department. It never came off. And then it was overtaken by events when Germany was reunited. As you can see, with recent negotiations between Jewish groups and the Swiss banks, the German

Library of Congress

and Swiss insurance claims, and the German companies about compensating the slave laborers, these issues remain important.

One other issue I don't know if we talked about, which was an all time consuming issue when I was DAS, was banning Austrian President Waldheim from entering the United States.

Q: You might explain that.

BODDE: Did I explain that?

Q: No, no, would you?

BODDE: Okay. Waldheim was president-

Q: Kurt Waldheim.

BODDE: Kurt Waldheim was president of Austria. It was a complicated situation because some years earlier the United States had supported Waldheim's successful candidacy for United Nations secretary general and now we were going to ban him as a war criminal from entry into the U.S. Waldheim had been in the German army and lied about his military service. He had been stationed in Yugoslavia when atrocities were committed. The German occupation in the Balkans was particularly brutal. Well, there was never really any good evidence that tied Waldheim directly to atrocities. Did he know that some bad things were going on? Probably. He was a staff officer. He probably signed some papers that had to do with deportations and so on. When I was in Vienna, Waldheim was political director of the foreign ministry. The embassy dealt with him all the time. I didn't deal with him because he was much above my level. But he was an important guy. Then we supported him to be secretary general of the United Nations. In the meantime, Congress passed a law, the Holtzman Act, named after a congresswoman who introduced it. The law was meant to keep out former Nazis, especially people who lied about their past in obtaining a

Library of Congress

visa and especially anybody who was connected with the concentration camps and other atrocities.

Well, all of a sudden, we had this case that involved the president of Austria. During his campaign to become president of Austria, the Social Democrat opposition made charges about his activities during the war. After he was elected president, groups in the U.S. began a campaign to put him on the list of people who were banned from entering the U.S. The World Jewish Congress was particularly active in pushing this, and Secretary Shultz had absolutely no sympathy for Waldheim himself. In my view he was the kind of person, and there are many of his type in Austria, who goes along to get along. He did lie about his military service. There's no doubt about that. On the other hand, I never saw any evidence, and I saw a lot of the files and so on, that would classify him as a war criminal. Under U.S. law the Justice Department makes the decision. There's an office in the Justice Department, the Office of Special Investigations, that is dedicated to uncovering former Nazis. The office has uncovered former concentration camp guards and others who hid their Nazi past when applying for entry into the U.S. Waldheim was the biggest case that they had handled to date.

The Austrians, of course, were beside themselves. After all Waldheim was their democratically elected president whom the U.S. had supported for the UN secretary general and now we were banning him as a war criminal. They were sure that this decision had more to do with American domestic politics than it did with Waldheim. They were also convinced that the U.S. was picking on Austria because it was small. They argued that if Waldheim were president of Germany, the U.S. wouldn't do such a thing because you need Germany. They claimed that prominent German politicians who were involved in worse things than Waldheim have gotten into the United States. This argument may have merit but it did not change the U.S. position. The decision to ban Waldheim was made by Attorney General Meese and Secretary Shultz went along with it. Thomas Klestil, Waldheim's successor as president, was just completing his tour as ambassador to the U.S. when the decision was made and he was crushed. When he was Austrian consul

Library of Congress

general in Los Angeles, Klestil developed a close relationship with the so-called California mafia that Reagan brought to Washington. There had been a lot of political pressure on the Administration to ban Waldheim, especially from the World Jewish Congress and other people to do this. Well, Klestil's friendships didn't do him much good.

Before the decision the Austrians would come to Washington and ask us not to do it. The World Jewish Congress also visited the Department to gain support for doing it. Our response to both sides was that this was a legal decision that would be made by the Justice Department based on U.S. law. Still, the Waldheim affair took up a lot of our time.

Ron Lauder, a political appointee, was ambassador to Austria at the time. He came back and he and I went to see the Secretary. Lauder was very close to the Jewish organizations in the U.S. and Austria but he was concerned about the damage a ban on Waldheim would do to U.S.-Austrian relations. I suspect that he was more concerned with the hostility that he would face in Vienna in the wake of a ban. He argued that the Austrian prime minister, a Social Democrat, was about to visit the U.S. and it would be a great embarrassment to him if we banned Waldheim. Shultz did not agree and got angry, so he threw us out of his office. Shultz said, "Get out! Get out!" and we went out. It is not a career-enhancing move, to get thrown out of the Secretary's office and to have done so in association with the likes of Ron Lauder made it doubly unpleasant.

Q: Lauder was a very difficult person, wasn't he?

BODDE: He had two problems. He was not a nasty man. He actually could be quite pleasant, but he wasn't very smart, and he was very spoiled. You know, his brother took over the company from their mother, Est#e Lauder. I guess they had to find something for Ronald to do, so they bought him an ambassadorship. He couldn't take pressure very well. He spent a great amount of time away from post. When we called to tell him the decision to ban Waldheim was about to be announced he said he was going to leave Austria for a

Library of Congress

few weeks. We told him to stay put. An ambassador cannot run off and leave his staff to handle such a situation.

Q: He was sort of a remittance man.

BODDE: Right. He was the remittance man. He ran for mayor of New York, too, and of course he didn't stand a chance. He and his mother decided the security provided by DS (Diplomatic Security) and the Austrians weren't good enough. Austrian security was quite extensive in the wake of the terrorist attack on OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) some years ago. However, in addition to Austrian security people, Lauder hired his own security guards and provided his own armed vehicle with smoke grenade launchers or something. Once when I was staying at the Residence with his successor, the former chief editor of Time Magazine, Henry Grunwald, I came down to breakfast and I said, "Henry, I looked across the courtyard and I notice you have barbed wire on the balcony of your bedroom." "You can get rid of it. If the terrorists get that close, you're finished anyhow. You don't have to wake up each morning looking at barbed wire." The house was like a fortress because Lauder and his mother were paranoid about his security.

Lauder was very difficult to deal with. As you know, his DCM, Felix Bloch, turned out to be a spy. Nobody was more shocked than I was. Felix was a friend of mine for twenty years. I obviously didn't suspect anything and, in fact, I helped him get a job when he left Vienna. Lauder did not fire Felix because he suspected that he was a spy but because the Austrians preferred to deal with Felix rather than Lauder. The ambassador had so alienated the Austrians that the foreign minister would not accept his invitations. Not surprisingly, relations between Felix and Lauder became very strained. I always stayed with the Blochs when I went to Vienna on business and they would often give a dinner for me. One time Felix called me before I left and said that he wanted to give an intimate dinner with the foreign minister and his wife, the head of the economic department in the foreign ministry, the Blochs and Ingrid and me. I told him it was fine with me but the

Library of Congress

ambassador was sure to be unhappy when he heard about it. Felix's response was that his relations with the ambassador couldn't get any worse anyhow. What I remember about the dinner is that, with the exception of Ingrid, everyone at the dinner, including the wives had attended SAIS, either in Washington or Bologna. How's that for networking. In all fairness to Lauder, no ambassador is going to put up with a DCM that has better access to the host government than he or she does. Anyhow, he sent Felix home a few months early, and I helped Felix get a job at EUR. I never suspected that he was a spy! Yes, Lauder was very difficult and very ineffective as ambassador.

Q: Well, how did the Waldheim thing come out?

BODDE: He was banned from the United States for his whole term of office, and because he wasn't allowed into the United States, most other major countries did not invite him for official visits. Normally that's what the Austrian president does. He is a figurehead and spends a great amount of time visiting other countries. The Pope received him, and that got people unhappy here. But, as I said before, the Pope has his own foreign policy. I don't think any other major country received him. Kohl used to meet with him unofficially when Kohl was on his annual summer vacation in Austria. The Germans were unhappy with our decision. They thought he was treated badly by the U.S. As a result of the ban Waldheim had a tainted presidency. Ironically, Thomas Klestil was elected president when Waldheim completed his term of office.

On a personal note, when I served in Vienna, the Chancellor's aide was a good friend of mine. Later he was Waldheim's campaign manager, and he finally had to resign because he said in an interview that unless they found that Waldheim had personally strangled somebody, they did not have a case. Once I went to see him when I was in Austria for these COCOM negotiations. It was sad, because he said, "Bill, you've turned my biggest success in my life to crap." He said, "I got this man elected president, and you turned around and ruined him." I didn't apologize, because I didn't think I had to apologize for what we did. That we were perfectly honest is another question. Would we have done this

Library of Congress

to the German chancellor? No, at least not during the Cold War when important strategic interests were at stake.

A man named Ryan headed the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) in the Justice Department that went after the Nazis. Like many ambitious people, he loved publicity. OSI would track down a former concentration camp guard who lied on his immigration forms. Many of them were Yugoslavs or Rumanians and all of them were old.

Q: These were the people who were often recruited into these so-called Volksdeutsch or Waffen SS or something.

BODDE: Yes, or even below that. But whatever their units, they were bad guys. Many were displaced persons at the end of the war and ended up in Austria. When they emigrated to the United States they hid their Nazi past. However, there was a clause in the displaced persons legislation that stated if you lied on your application to come to the U.S., you could be deported back to the country from where you emigrated. So even if they were Rumanians or Yugoslavs, if they emigrated to the U.S. from Austria they could be deported back to Austria. Of course, this made the Austrians very unhappy. They told us that they didn't know about these people's past and why should they be saddled with former Rumanians or Yugoslavs.

To make matters worse, the Justice Department would cut corners. They would pull in some seventy or eighty year old man and tell him he had two choices. He could go on trial and face the likely possibility of spending the rest of his life in jail, or he could renounce his U.S. citizenship and be deported to Austria. Most often they would take the second choice. So far the Justice Department was acting completely above board. They would have the person renounce his or her U.S. citizenship. Then they would give the person a travel document that was just good until he got to Austria, and put the person on a direct flight to Austria. The ex-concentration guard would then show up on the Austrian's doorstep. Then Ryan or someone from OSI would leak to The New York Times that they had nabbed

Library of Congress

another Nazi and deported him to Austria. Well, the Austrians would be embarrassed, because it would look like the U.S. was sending another Nazi back to Austria. We were treating Austria shabbily and finally the State Department forced the Justice Department to negotiate a new arrangement. We sent out a delegation headed by the Department's deputy legal adviser legal advisor to negotiate an arrangement that would include prior notification and so on. The sad thing was that one of the OSI lawyers on the team was anxious to get home to his family. So when the negotiations were completed he flew to London to pick up a plane that would get him home sooner. The rest of the delegation waited a day to catch a direct flight to Washington. The Justice lawyer picked up PanAm 103 in Frankfurt and was killed by the bomb over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Q: Apparently Libyan terrorists.

BODDE: Yes.

Q: I got called in a couple of times in the early '80s and they'd show me pictures: Did you issue a visa to this man? And we're talking about '55, '56, and I was issuing maybe a hundred visas a day in Frankfurt. No displaced persons, and this refugee relief program.

BODDE: Sure.

Q: Actually, one of the guys I kind of remembered, but you know, I don't know, if he said he hadn't been a concentration camp guard, I would have probably issued him the visa, but they were...

BODDE: Well you know what was happening when I was in Frankfurt in the 1980s. We would have people who were fairly prominent who held unlimited multiple-entry U.S. visas. When the German passport expired and they would request a new visa, you could explain to them until you were blue in the face that the U.S. visa remains valid even if their passport expires. They should just take their old passport with the valid visa together with their new passport when they wanted to enter the U.S. Germans are nothing if not

Library of Congress

thorough and when they showed up at the consulate general and applied for a new visa we'd do a check. It is highly computerized now, and it would show up that they were members of the Nazi Party and were possibly excludable under the Holtzman Act. If that were the case, we refused to give a visa and would cancel their old visa. This might be somebody who had been going back and forth for years. I remember one case, he'd been back and forth to the United States 25 times, and all of a sudden he didn't qualify. On the other hand, some bad guys showed up. I remember one guy who had been in the Gestapo, and we had records that showed that he had been an interrogator at an American POW camp. There was testimony that he had roughed up some of the POWs. He came in and appealed. I was happy to see him turned him down and he will never get to see the shores of the United States again.

But sure, it's this kind of ex post facto thing that we got into. I find it interesting that the Holocaust has become much more prominent fifty years after the war than it was 20 years after the war, or even right after the war. At the end of the war we issued visas to German scientists who were Nazis and to Nazi intelligence officers as well. We wanted the information and we did not want it to fall into the hands of the Soviets. You might remember that we took the high moral road right after the war and declared that anyone who had belonged to the Nazi Party could only work at menial jobs. We soon found that we couldn't get Germany back on its feet without tapping the expertise of people who had been party members. So decisions were made then in the light of the necessities at the time and were perfectly legitimate, I think.

Q: Well, before we leave this particular job, what about Switzerland, '86-89? Did you have any particular problems with Switzerland?

BODDE: Not really serious problems. The Nazi gold problem or Jewish claims against Swiss insurance companies had not yet surfaced. We had two issues with Switzerland. One was the COCOM list, that is, getting them to agree to restrictions on the shipment of sensitive goods of U.S. origin to communist countries. A new agreement was almost

Library of Congress

completed when I arrived and I worked on the end game. The other issue was a civil aviation issue. American airlines in Switzerland were treated badly in comparison to Swissair. I think they couldn't even have their own designated ticket counters. Such situations are not uncommon when you compete with a single national carrier in their home country. We faced similar problems with Lufthansa in Frankfurt, and in Tokyo the Japanese airlines are in the new terminal and the international airlines are all in the old terminal, which is lousy.

I was lucky that we had a competent political appointee ambassador for most of my time as DAS. Earlier we had serious problems with a political appointee. She was a very right-wing Republican who had been ambassador to Switzerland twice.

Q: Heckler?

BODDE: Not Heckler. Heckler was in Ireland and I think did a pretty good job. Her name was Faith Ryan Whittlesey. She was from Pennsylvania. She had been in the Reagan White House and then appointed ambassador. She stayed a few years and left. Then after a year or two they sent her back to Bern. I guess she didn't get what she wanted. She was really a piece of work because she went through DCMs like they were Kleenex. It got so bad that there was a congressional hearing about her actions and what was happening to the career people who she had fired. She mistrusted the Foreign Service and you had to be ideologically acceptable. What really killed me was that I had to go up and testify on her behalf because nobody else would go. Director General George Vest and Under Secretary Ron Spiers didn't want to touch it and Roz was away. All I could do, in good conscience, was to testify that we took care of all the DCMs that came out and nobody's career was ruined. But, it really irritated the hell out of me to go up and defend a person like that. Fortunately, I gave my testimony in good faith because we did take good care of the officers she fired. The second day, Vest and Spiers testified under pressure.

Library of Congress

We had mostly political appointees in Bern. Sometimes they were okay, and once in a while we've had a good one, but we have foisted a lot of very weak ambassadors on Switzerland. Naturally the Swiss resent it. The latest case is the fellow Clinton appointed who died in Switzerland. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery and then it turned out that his claims to being a war hero were false and they had to remove him.

I spent a lot of time with the Swiss ambassador. He had an excellent DCM who's now the head of a big Swiss company. But the ambassador was very effective, and he went back home to be the permanent undersecretary in the foreign ministry. The Swiss embassy was an active embassy. They had money and they knew how to play Washington well. Of course, later the life of the Swiss ambassador changed dramatically with the whole business of Nazi gold. A friend of mine, Ruth van Heuven, became country director of central European affairs or whatever it's called now. She is actually of Swiss descent and had served as consul general in Zurich. Her husband, Martin, too, was a Foreign Service Officer. Anyhow, she told me that when she took over as country director, she expected to spend 90 percent of her time on Germany and 10 percent of her time on Austria and Switzerland. It turned out to be just the opposite ratio. Nazi gold was the big issue. But in my time it wasn't an issue, so the big issues were COCOM and to some degree Swissair. In case you don't think the world has changed, the CEO of Swissair now is an American. Whittlesey got into trouble for using private funds that had been contributed to fix up the Residence as her own private slush fund.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point? We have basically covered the time as a DAS from '86 to '89.

BODDE: Yes, I don't think that we can milk that for any more.

Q: So next time we pick this up, we'll pick it up in '89 - you, what, came to the Foreign Service Institute for a year? And we'll start with that.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Yes.

Q: In '89, when you were in charge of the Senior Seminar for a year.

BODDE: I will try and wrap it up at the next one, just simply because I leave on the 20th and I'll be gone for 10 weeks. If we could wrap it up it will be nice; then we don't have to worry about... If we don't, we don't.

Q: If we don't, we don't.

Bill, let's go back again. We may be duplicating ourselves, but I've been reading the Bush book *A World Transformed*, and what I've just reached so far is, he's talking about the period of the first half of '89, when you were still dealing with the issue about how there Germans, Kohl, were being pushed by Genscher and were getting kind of mushy on us as far as nuclear things, because the Soviets were talking about the Cold War as over and all that sort of thing. I wonder if you could sort of reprise the nuclear business vis-#-vis how the Germans reacted and the view of the Green Party and all, and then talk about this particular period.

BODDE: Well, sure. The big decision to deploy the U.S.-controlled intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM) in 1994 was very difficult for the Germans. It required Kohl to show some backbone, which he did. I think it also played a major role in what happened afterwards, including the final demise of the Soviet Union. Some years earlier the U.S. had proposed a zero-zero option with the Soviets, where we would both go to zero on that kind of missile. Actually the U.S. proposal was the brainstorm of Richard Perle in the Defense Department, who never thought the Soviets would agree to it. He thought zero-zero was an impossible condition. It turned out eventually the Soviets did agree to it, but they only did so after we began to deploy the intermediate range missiles. The Social Democrats and the Greens, and the German left wing in general, were vocal opponents of

Library of Congress

deployment. The Soviets encouraged the opposition and in some cases it is likely that they provided money.

I don't think the SPD or Greens were manipulated by the Soviets, but opposed deployment on their own. The SPD, the Greens and the Left demonstrated throughout West Germany. They were the biggest demonstrations to take place in postwar Germany. There was considerable sympathy for the anti-deployment demonstrations among the German public in general who were worried about a possible war. But basically, Kohl stood tall; and we deployed. And the fascinating thing was the minute we deployed, the demonstrations stopped. They lost the game, and they just walked away from it. I mean, they didn't keep it up once we'd deployed the missiles. The Russians returned to the arms control negotiations and eventually the Russians and we agreed to a treaty that got the IRBMs out of Europe on both sides.

Q: It seems to imply an outside force calling the shots.

BODDE: Well, at least mutual positions on this issue between the outside forces in the Soviet Union and the Left in Germany. There is no doubt that the SPD and Greens and FDP (Free Democratic Party) were more ready to accommodate the Soviets than the CDU/CSU. The FDP could also be squishy.

Another issue that came up that had the potential to be even more controversial than the deployment of the intermediate range missiles. The short range nuclear missiles in Germany were outmoded and needed replacement. However, replacement was very unpopular in Germany across the board. Short range missiles were targeted on East Germany from West Germany and the Soviet missiles were targeted on West Germany from East Germany. The way the German public saw it, the missiles on both sides were primarily meant to kill Germans. So the Germans were very unhappy with the idea while we were pressing modernization. It was clear to me that the political climate in Germany wouldn't allow us to deploy new short range missiles. At the beginning of the Bush

Library of Congress

Administration when I was still DAS, I drove over to the White House with Secretary Baker to a meeting. It must have been to sit in on the President's meeting with some foreign visitor.

Q: This was-?

BODDE: 1989. I had no regular access to Baker so I used the opportunity in the car to bring up the subject of the short range missiles. He commented that he was aware that there were problems with the Germans on the issue but we would wait until after the upcoming elections and then deploy the new missiles. I said, "Mr. Secretary, they will never deploy them. I don't know who's telling you that the Germans will deploy after the election but they are wrong. The Germans will not deploy them. It isn't going to happen." Well, he was shocked to hear this, and evidently I see it never got to Scowcroft or the President, from what I read there, but the writing was on the wall. Of course, the whole issue was overtaken by events, with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The first foreign visit that Bush made after he was elected President was to Europe. Among the countries he visited were Germany and Italy. I was able to push through the non-immigration visa waiver program for both countries because of his impending visit. The visa waiver program was intended for countries that do not require visitor visas for Americans, send many visitors to the U.S. and have a low rate of visa fraud. I think we started in Japan and Canada, and extended the program. Germany and Italy were now the next in line to be eligible.

Q: France, I think.

BODDE: No, France came later because the French required U.S. travelers to have visas. The next ones logically were Italy and Germany, which send large numbers of visitors to the U.S. and where there was very little fraud. The problem was that the Justice Department opposed the waiver program for Italy and Germany. The FBI claimed that the waiver program would make it easier for mafiosi to enter the U.S. undetected. The

Library of Congress

Nazi hunters opposed the program for Germany for the same reason. We in EUR believed these objections were overdone. We were unlikely to have many Nazis or mafiosi slip through, and we had bigger things going with the Germans and the Italians. I told you about moving the U.S. air wing from Spain to Italy, and all the stuff we had going with Kohl. Both countries would be offended if they were banned from the program.

Well, the President's visit was coming up, and I called an inter-agency meeting to discuss the issues. As I expected, the FBI or the Justice Department pounded me. At the meeting I suggested that if we couldn't agree on permitting Germany and Italy to join the waiver program, the opposing agencies do a memo to the President. The memo should instruct the President, "When you go to Germany, you must explain to Mr. Kohl that you can't let Germans have this waiver because there's too many Nazis there." In Italy he can explain to the prime minister that there are too many mafiosi to allow the waiver. I wanted a memo from their organizations. Of course, I wasn't going to get such a memo. The memo that went to the President laid out the pros and cons. President Bush's decision was actually made on Air Force One on the way to Europe.

Q: *"You're Nazis and you're mafiosi, but other than that we think you're great."*

BODDE: Right, we love you except for that. But back to the nuclear stuff, because of what happened with the whole reunification issue. I wasn't there, but I did observe events very closely. It seems to me that events moved so quickly that people and policies were swept along. Looking back, it is clear that the window of opportunity under Gorbachev was very small. It was to Kohl's everlasting credit that he seized the moment. Gorbachev didn't go along because he wanted to but because he felt he didn't have any alternative. But it was Kohl, with George Bush's firm backing, who pressed on and carried off reunification. The Social Democrats weren't pushing quick reunification. They were caught off guard by the fall of the Berlin Wall and were forever playing "catch up ball." And the Greens certainly weren't pushing it. The SPD and the Greens would have rather seen an eventual confederation that would include West and East Germany. While not quite a united

Library of Congress

country, under the Socialist's theory the two halves over the years would grow closer and closer until they were de facto one country. Genscher and, I suspect, Baker would have settled for less than Kohl got. That is, a united Germany as a member of NATO.

It was Kohl who realized that the West had to seize the initiative and put unification to a vote in the former East Germany. The Federal Republic used the accession clause in the West German constitution. The states that made up the eastern part of Germany applied to become new states in the Federal Republic of Germany and their request was granted. Kohl's genius was in getting the Russians to agree to East Germany becoming part of an enlarged West Germany within NATO. That was not predetermined by any means. If Kohl had waited until Yeltsin took power, it would have been much more difficult, if not impossible. Last year former President Bush spoke at the annual American Council on Germany dinner in New York. Someone got up and said that Germany owed a great debt to Bush and Scowcroft for taking this position and holding it against British and the French opposition.

I took the Senior Seminar to Bonn and Berlin in February 1990, right after the Wall opened but before the East Germans had voted for reunification. We met with key politicians and officials in Bonn, West Berlin and East Berlin. When I got home my wife asked me what it was like. I told her that the West Germans didn't have a clue how expensive reunification was going to be and the East Germans did not have a clue how painful it was going to be! Kohl was less than completely honest with the voters about how expensive it might be because, I believe, he didn't want to jeopardize the one chance for rapid reunification.

By the way, you mentioned the French and the visa waiver program...

Q: Why don't we hold it one second?

BODDE: One of the reasons we wanted to extend the visa waiver program to the Europeans was because Americans didn't need visas for most of Europe. The fact that we did not under their theory was an irritant in relations with those countries. Well, once

Library of Congress

we granted visa waivers to most of Western Europe, France finally came around. They dropped their visa requirement for Americans and we extended the visa waiver program to France.

Just an aside. I don't know if you saw it in yesterday's New York Times. If you haven't, I'll save it for you. It's an article in the Sunday "The Week in Review" section by Craig Whitney, a good friend of mine. He writes that the U.S. perceives France as being a difficult ally and the UK as being a friendly ally, and he takes issue with that.

Q: Very interesting.

BODDE: Do you have a fax here? I'll fax it to you.

Q: Yes, I do. I'll give it to you afterwards. You know, one of the things I'd like to go back to is this short-range nuclear issue in the first part of '89. You say obviously events completely took care of it - all of a sudden it just wasn't an issue - but in my reading this is, as far as I can tell, almost the first time that you found Germany and the United States really moving away from each other. I mean usually Germany grumbled and all but would come around. But here is the point. I mean, is that your reading too?

BODDE: No, Germany would not have come around. In fact, at the time I was talking to someone who worked on the Seventh Floor in the Department. I asked him if they didn't realize that they were setting President Bush up for a bad time if he went to his meeting with Kohl believing that postponing deployment until after the German elections would solve the problem. He said no and that he had never heard any discussion about how this or any other action would affect the President's trip. The implication I drew was that the Seventh Floor was more concerned about making Baker look good than making the President look good. Baker was so bothered that he had a reputation as a wheeler-dealer that he wanted to prove himself a statesman at any cost.

Library of Congress

By the way there were other times that the Germans and the Americans didn't see eye to eye. Remember the Soviet natural gas pipeline project that the Germans and the Russians had dreamed up. That put them on a collision course with the U.S. I also remember the case of a German industrialist selling chemicals to Libya that we suspected would be used to manufacture poison gas. The Germans kept stonewalling us when we told them to stop it. They needed more proof or they didn't have the legal basis to stop the exports. I had a heart to heart talk with the German ambassador in Washington. I told Ambassador Rufus that any story that linked Germany to poison gas production would be very harmful to Germany's reputation in the U.S. He agreed strongly and together we got the German government to take action to stop the exports and punish the exporter. Ambassador Rufus and his DCM were first-rate diplomats. Historically, the German ambassadors to the U.S. have been very much a mixed bag. We have done better by Germany than Germany has done by us. Genscher as the longest serving foreign minister in German history completely politicized the foreign ministry. If you weren't one Genscher's people - a German friend of mine calls them "Genschmen" - you did not get important assignments. So obviously Rufus was as "Genschman," as was the DCM, but they were very good.

As I mentioned last time, there's always great suspicion of Genscher, and before Genscher, with Willi Brandt when he originally embarked on his eastern policy called Ostpolitik. Washington was worried that they would be too accommodating to the communists. The fear is grounded in German history. Historically, whenever Germany turned to the East, especially Russia, it has spelled disaster. In the past Germany has considered itself a Central European power rather than part of the West. Adenauer devoted himself in the postwar period to tying Germany to Western Europe and the U.S. That is why their membership in the European Union and in NATO is so important. The Adenauer policy has been embraced by all of the successor German governments.

But as the war recedes in memory, the Germans were bound to become a little restive about automatically agreeing to whatever the U.S. or other nations want. The new SPD-

Library of Congress

Green Government in Berlin is somewhat less accommodating to France than in the past. The Germans are impatient with the European Community. They want to see reform and they want Germany's share of the budget reduced. The Germans have started saying that's enough. Well, I think you got a little of that in the short range missile debate. The American military always wants everything. They want to have short range, intermediate, and long range missiles, You know, too much is never enough.

Q: Looking at it from some remove, it does seem a little much to argue why you need short range nuclear weapons.

BODDE: The short range missile debate drags you right into a very big strategic doctrine question. Kissinger wrote a book in the '50s about using tactical nuclear weapons in battle. Since then Kissinger and most strategists have come to the conclusion that once you use nuclear weapons of any sort you have crossed a threshold that will quickly escalate into an exchange of nuclear weapons of mass destruction. So the idea of short range nuclear weapons is based on the principle that you could use them in a controlled situation. I doubt that that was true. Some Germans were worried that we would more quickly use short range missiles against the Soviets because the mainland of the U.S. was not threatened. They were not confident that the U.S. forces stationed in Germany would be the tripwire that brought massive retaliation from the U.S. They were constantly in fear that the U.S. would decouple from Europe.

Most of the disputes we dealt with were not about strategic arguments but were what we called "basing issues." I spent a great amount of time when I was consul general dealing with these issues. Sometimes the problem was caused simply from having a large civilian population and a military population in close proximity. Sometimes it was not the military's fault. It is like the phenomenon that often occurs when you build an airport. When the airport is built it is in the countryside far from the population center. Then over time people build houses closer and closer to the airport. Finally, the people living near the airport complain about the noise and inconvenience, especially if the airport wants to expand. The

Library of Congress

fact that they moved there after the airport was built doesn't seem to matter. In Hessen we had the same problem with training areas and firing ranges.

At the height of the Cold War the inconvenience was acceptable. But over the years, more people moved closer to those areas - war didn't seem so likely - so firing artillery and other weapons, especially at night, and low-flying airplanes drove them crazy. To be fair we did things in Germany we couldn't do anywhere else in the world, except maybe out in the Arizona desert, but you certainly wouldn't do them in any populated area in the United States. Well, that stuff became more and more of an irritant. It was controllable, but every once in a while the U.S. military would be a little over reaching. They always thought that their demands outweighed anything else.

Q: Well, in this first half of '89, before you left, was there the feeling in EUR that the Left in Germany - the Social Democrats, the Greens and all - had been moving farther away from the Schmidt or Willi Brandt-type Left?

BODDE: Particularly Schmidt, yes.

Q: It was not just an internal change - I mean internal politics - but there were other things we really were concerned about.

BODDE: I think so. The SPD often sent people to Washington to explain the party's policies. Schröder, when he was a minister president, called on me in the Department to explain the party's positions, which were more and more at odds with our positions or NATO's positions. They were in the opposition, so they couldn't do too much harm. The Social Democrats and the Greens believed that by cultivating the East Germans and the Soviets they were contributing to world peace and somehow making things better for the people living in East Germany. Well, out of the blue, the Wall came down and soon the German Democratic Republic collapsed. Yes, there were problems with the Social Democrats.

Library of Congress

Q: Because at this time Kohl was feeling the heat, it was your office's analysis that Kohl would not agree to the short range nuclear...

BODDE: That's right, that he would consider replacement of the short range missiles politically untenable. It wasn't just that he was being soft and we were being tough. That would be inaccurate. Our relationship with the Germans was very complex. On the one hand they wanted to be part of Europe and on the other they worried that if the U.S. became disillusioned with Europe and Germany we would drop our commitment to defend them in case of war. They were afraid of losing the security that came from being under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Up until the Gorbachev-Reagan summit in Reykjavik we had done a pretty good job maintaining German and allied support for our efforts to negotiate arms reductions with the Soviet Union. They didn't feel that they were betrayed or that we were going to desert Europe and leave them to their fate. But Reykjavik really shocked them, and it took a lot of work to put back together.

Q: It shocked everybody.

BODDE: It shocked everybody because nobody really understood that Reagan really wanted to abolish nuclear weapons. It didn't square with his hard-line image. After all this was the "Evil Empire" man himself. Reagan really thought that nuclear weapons were an evil thing in themselves. If he and Gorbachev could get rid of them, it would be a wonderful thing. Well, the point was that the nuclear deterrent was central to our deterrent strategy. We didn't match the Soviets in ground troops, so if they came across the Fulda Gap we could hold on for a short while but we would have to resort to nuclear weapons at some point. That is one of the reasons we could not accept the no first use proposal. It was the threat that we would use nuclear weapons that kept the Soviets in the box, so to speak.

Then all of a sudden without warning it seems that the U.S. and the USSR were negotiating a ban on nuclear weapons. There had been no prior warning to the allies before Reykjavik. The allies, particularly the Germans, were besides themselves. They

Library of Congress

were already concerned that Reagan's "Star Wars" proposal would decouple the U.S. from Europe and now this. In a way "Star Wars" saved the day. The Soviets were worried that "Star Wars" research would lead to a U.S. breakthrough in missile defense technology and the Soviets would not be able to match it. Moreover, the Soviet economy could not sustain a new anti-missile defense arms race. Although Reagan wanted to reach agreement on the banning of nuclear weapons, he would not sacrifice "Star Wars" to get it. The end result was that they did not reach agreement but they came close enough to scare the hell out of our allies. No pun intended but the allies went ballistic when they found out that he almost negotiated the U.S. nuclear deterrent away. We immediately set about calming everybody down, and getting them back on the reservation.

The Germans were always insecure, and that's understandable. Because of their Nazi past they felt nobody loved them. So the U.S. had to tell the Germans that we loved them over and over again. It's like having a wife that won't believe that you love her. You're married for 40-odd years, but you have to say it ten times a day. The Germans knew that there was a latent anti-German feeling, not only in the United States, but all over the world. It was understandable given the suffering caused by Hitler in World War II.

The Germans had good cause to be nervous. Some Americans and Europeans were forever warning that "The Huns are at it again!" If you don't watch them, the argument ran, they will go back to their bad old way. Reykjavik was their worst nightmare come true. They were very upset and it took a lot to put things back together again..

Q: Well, during the time of the Bush Administration, I mean, the short time that you had with him, was there concern within the European bureau about Gorbachev, because he was such a fresh face and saying things. Was there concern within sort of the professional ranks that he seemed to be getting the high ground without really producing anything that really was furthering the cause of peace? It seemed like another sort of peace offensive by the Soviets, which we'd had year after year, but with little effect; but this guy seemed to be getting to the people.

BODDE: Yes, there was. I mean, there's no doubt about it. We started out very, very suspicious. The Germans were just the opposite. Genscher made a speech at the annual Davos meeting calling for the West to help Gorbachev. At that point, we felt that we are not in the business of helping him; we should be in the business of dealing with him. In retrospect, I think history will rate Gorbachev pretty high, because without Gorbachev things could have turned very bad. He didn't start out to bring about the end of Communism and the Soviet Union. He started out to change the Soviet Union and the Communist Party enough so that they both could survive. However, he unleashed forces he could not control. But yes, in the beginning we were concerned that Gorbachev would seduce the Germans. In the early days, he seemed to be achieving what the Soviets had always been trying to do: separate the Germans from the U.S.

The Moscow summit with Gorbachev must have been something. I wasn't there; I was acting assistant secretary back in the Department but I heard a great deal from my EUR front office colleagues when they came back. The way these summits worked, there were meetings of the two leaders with only interpreters present. There were also meetings between the two leaders together with their senior staff. Between these two meetings there were meetings between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze as well as working group meetings on arms control, human rights, and other issues. At the end of the summit there would be a joint communiqué. The language in the communiqué is important because it is a jointly agreed road plan of what the two sides agreed to do. You don't want to send the wrong signals. In Moscow the Russians had inserted language about peace and coexistence.

Q: This is the Soviets.

BODDE: Yes, and Reagan was willing to sign onto it, but Roz Ridgway warned him that there is a lot of political baggage in the term "peaceful coexistence" that goes back to another time. It is closely associated with Presidents Ford and Nixon and Kissinger. It conjures up the whole detente debate. She told him that she didn't think that it would be in

Library of Congress

the U.S. interest to find itself once again entangled in that argument. Peaceful coexistence has different meanings to different people, and they were not all positive. Gorbachev was so infuriated that we wouldn't accept the term that at the final meeting of the two leaders and their delegations he called Ridgway, "That lady with iron teeth." But Roz stood up to him. She didn't back down for a minute. And here was Gorbachev screaming at her in front of the President and the Secretary of State but she held firm. That's Roz.

Q: This was when?

BODDE: That would have been the Moscow summit; I think that was '89 or the end of '88. It was obviously still in the Reagan Administration. It might have been the last Reagan summit. But anyhow...

The Germans, I think they were right on the short range missiles, but there was always the suspicion that they might become soft. I think that was unfair. I think they did the necessary when they had to. It isn't pleasant to put up with unfair criticism when you're paying a high political price as the German leaders often had to...

Q: Something that concerns me is that you were saying that you used going over to the White House to tell Baker that the Germans weren't going to buy this short range missile thing, which seemed to have taken the President and the national security advisor and all - I mean they were really working hard on this thing, and here are our people who are dealing with it on the ground, coming to the conclusion that it's not going to fly, and Baker not being aware that this was the professional opinion. Is this indicative of how at least the early Baker operation worked?

BODDE: I think yes. Not just early Baker; that was Baker's way of operating. He had a very small inner circle: himself, Margaret Tutwiler and Bob Zoellick. Larry Eagleburger as deputy secretary handled the things Baker was uninterested in. Basically, the building and the Foreign Service were shut out. It was even worse than in the Kissinger days. As far as EUR's influence at that time, first of all, you've got to remember that we were lame

Library of Congress

ducks. Baker was there and Scowcroft was at the NSC (National Security Council), and a new team was coming into State, but the EUR team hadn't completely changed yet. Roz left. In fact, Baker pushed Roz out. Many of us thought she would become the deputy undersecretary for political affairs, you know, the number three that is usually reserved for a career officer. Baker brought in Kimmitt from Treasury for that position. Baker claims he offered Roz the ambassadorship to NATO and she turned it down.

Q: That's not much of a job, in a way.

BODDE: Well, not compared to the jobs she had held, and not compared to being deputy undersecretary. I heard later that Dick Cheney, the Secretary of Defense, called her and offered her a job because he had heard that she was very good and had been treated badly. She didn't take it and went to be the head of the Atlantic Council and to serve on a number of Fortune 500 boards of directors. But there was no doubt that there was a new foreign policy team in charge. Baker and his team on the Seventh Floor were handling issues such as the short range nuclear missiles by themselves. Over in the White House, there was Brent Scowcroft and Condoleezza Rice, who handled the Soviet Union and arms control. Philip Zelikow, an FSO that I had never heard of, handled Germany. The old gang still left in the EUR front office was out of the loop. I mean, it was clear that we were not part of the new team. We certainly didn't have the influence that we had had in the Shultz times. One of the last things I did as EUR DAS was to go with the advance team to Bonn and London to prepare President Bush's first trip to Europe.

The Baker team was busy taking care of Baker. Baker was busy taking care of Baker. I don't think that he was out to hurt the President, but he wasn't in the you've-got-to-protect-the-President mode either. I think there was much more rivalry between Baker and Bush than was assumed at the time. Former President Bush did not attend the opening of the James Baker Library at Rice University. They were old friends going back to Texas politics. Certainly Baker deserves a lot of credit for Bush's election as President. Yet it is also clear that Baker was very reluctant to step down as Secretary of State and go back

Library of Congress

and run the second Bush campaign. He did so only at the last moment. I have read that Barbara Bush feels that by dragging his feet, Baker was, to a large degree, responsible for Bush's defeat. I think some of the rivalry comes through in the BusScowcroft book. Baker is mentioned in the book, but the praise is less than unstinting. Bush writes that Baker did a good job, but it also clear that he and Baker saw many issues differently.

Q: I sort of had the impression from the outside that Baker with his team, particularly Margaret Tutwiler and all, were really working to protect Baker as a possible candidate for President or something, and so they were trying to keep Baker away from unpleasant things. And I think in the Gulf War there was a kind of a delay on the whole thing. The Secretary of State normally is the person who has to deal with bad news, and they had a team that wanted to keep him away from dealing with bad news.

BODDE: You may be right. Tutwiler's job was to protect Baker's image. Zoellick did the heavy intellectual lifting and others such as Eagleburger, Kimmitt and others were brought in as needed. The office of the Secretary of State under Baker (and Albright for that matter) has been more concerned with promoting the Secretary than promoting American foreign policy. Neither Baker or Albright are inclusive leaders and policy suffers as a consequence. To see the contrast with one of our greatest Secretaries, I recommend the recent biography of Dean Acheson by James Chace. It is clear that Acheson spent a good amount of his time figuring how he could do best by his country and best by his President.

During the end of my DAS period I accompanied the new Canadian ambassador when he presented his credentials to President Bush. I went because the DAS for Canada was not available. The Canadian ambassador, Derrick Burney, a career Canadian foreign service officer, had been Prime Minister Mulroney's chief of staff. Bush had met him a few times in that capacity and they liked each other. In my brief time as acting DAS for Canada, I went to Canada with then Vice President Bush to see Mulroney and I accompanied Reagan to a U.S.-Canada summit in Ottawa. I haven't talked about my experiences as acting DAS for Canada. U.S.-Canada relations are really unique because almost anything we do in

Library of Congress

the U.S. has an impact on Canada. But anyhow, I too knew Derek Burney somewhat when I went with him to present his credentials. It was a very relaxed and friendly meeting. Burney said, "Well, Mr. President, I've called on Jim Baker, and he looked really tired. He's going flat out." "Oh, really?" Bush replied, "Flat-out? Tired? He always seems tired. I don't know what's the matter with that guy." It was all in good fun and the sort of razzing that goes on among friends. Still, it sounded a little peculiar that the President would talk that way about his Secretary of State to a foreign envoy, especially as George Bush was not a vindictive person.

Q: No, no, no.

BODDE: -and it just indicated to me that, hey, maybe they aren't the bosom buddies that the media makes them out to be. Obviously their relationship was complicated. I don't know if in the case of the short range missiles they wanted to keep bad news from Baker or if they just didn't know better. I remember one of the Reagan appointees at the Pentagon told me, "Jim Baker never leaves a footprint. You look around, and you're never going to be able to blame Jim Baker for anything." He was a first rate political operator but he wanted to be remembered in history as a statesman. That's why he hated to go back to the White House to run the campaign. Baker, Tutwiler and Zoellick probably got back into the campaign too late to save the day. Well, I think Baker's view of foreign policy was very much the politician's view. It's valuable for a Secretary to have a good sense of politics but the "lets make a deal mentality" does not make a great Secretary of State. He or she has to have a broader vision than that.

Can I talk about Canada?

Q: I was just going to ask, because we really hadn't talked about Canada, and I find this is always a fascinating relationship. Please. Could you tell me your connection to Canada?

BODDE: Yes, the connection was that when I came into EUR when Roz Ridgway was assistant secretary; Charlie Thomas was the senior deputy, and he did NATO and arms

Library of Congress

control; Tom Simon did the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; and Jim Wilkinson did Greece, Turkey, Scandinavia, the UK, and the European Union. I did Western Europe, or the gourmet circuit, as I used to call it. My portfolio included the two Germanies, Switzerland, Austria, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Malta, and the Vatican. We had one DAS who was a political appointee, who covered Canada. He left to become consul general in Bermuda and there was a four-month hiatus before the new deputy arrived. Congress had pressured the State Department to pay more attention to Canada. Congress wanted the Department of State to create a separate bureau for Canada. They always wanted separate bureaus for their pet projects. To avoid that, the Department established a separate deputy assistant secretary for Canada within the EUR front office. It was a good idea. I found that when I added Canada to my portfolio I was swamped.

Of course, I had eleven other countries besides Canada, including both Germanies, but the U.S. is so intertwined with Canada, everything we do affects them. I mean, say we change the road tariffs in the United States, then boom - it had a major impact on the Canadian economy, and they protest. I am talking about the time before the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA. Now the relationship is even more entangled. Trade issues, particularly in fisheries, were very sensitive issues in Canada and in the United States because they affect people in both countries directly. And so we had epic battles over salmon and other fisheries, and even such things as shakes and shingles, which are used on roofs. I didn't know what a shake was until then. We had a major trade dispute over palettes that you use in warehousing and shipping and over cut flowers and beer. Some of these disputes became very acrimonious. Other issues with Canada were acid rain and the question of sovereignty over the Arctic Sea. Canada claimed all of the Arctic including the ice and the shipping lanes. We argued that the Arctic Sea was high seas even if it was frozen and we demanded freedom of navigation. We would send a Coast Guard icebreaker through the region and the Canadians would protest. It was a serious problem.

Library of Congress

To make matters worse, the Canadian ambassador in Washington was very emotional and prone to panic. His wife was famous because she used to write a column in the Washington Post

Q: Mrs. Gottlieb. Sandra Gottlieb.

BODDE: Right, she slapped her social secretary or I guess she did, and then her name was mud. Before her downfall she'd written a weekly column in the Canadian papers and The Washington Post. They were quite witty. Ambassador Gottlieb was very nervous and always panicking about something.

One of the biggest disputes we had with Canada was over acid rain. Now you've got to remember that the Reagan Administration was very conservative, and they didn't like environmental issues. They thought the Canadians were wrong to blame U.S. industry. The U.S. Administration claimed that there was still disagreement among scientists about the causes of acid rain. Our argument was that the problem needed more scientific analysis. The Canadians claimed it was clear that acid rain in Canada was caused by U.S. industry. However, to calm them down the U.S. signed a treaty with Canada whereby we were committed jointly to contribute a sizable sum of money to study the problem. We both agreed to put in a billion dollars or so. The Reagan appointees were unenthusiastic about putting up the money so we dragged our feet. The Canadians were furious. The Secretary usually avoided receiving Gottlieb because he was so hyper. Gottlieb was frantic and came to see Roz Ridgway. He told her that things had reached such an impasse that Prime Minister Mulroney was about to get into a plane and come down to see his friend President Reagan to sort things out. According to Gottlieb, Mulroney was on the tarmac about to board the plane if we didn't do something right away.

It was decided that to avoid the embarrassment of Mulroney coming down, Vice President Bush would fly up to Ottawa and calm him down. We always worried when Mulroney got together with Reagan because the President, out of affection for the prime minister, would

Library of Congress

tend to be a little too forthcoming. At that point I was responsible for Canada for all of four days. I wasn't completely uninformed because I read the EUR daily activity report and attended Roz' meetings with her DASs every evening. Canada was always a subject of discussion at the deputies meetings. Still, it was daunting after only four days on the job to go and brief the Vice President at lunch in the White House.

By the way, the evening staff meeting and the daily reports were excellent management tools. Each country director made a daily report to the assistant secretary. It came out at the end of the day. It would include a page from each area, which would be contributed by the desk officers. It provided two-way communications between the desk officers and the assistant secretary. Roz read the daily reports religiously and had them sent to her by cable when she was on the road. She would send her comments back to the desk officer written in the margins with a copy to the DAS and the country director. I always read the whole thing, so I could keep abreast of the European and Canadian issues beyond my immediate responsibilities. We also used them as a device to get decisions quickly on small but important questions - for instance, the desk officer would say so-and-so is coming to see the President, da-da-da, do you want to attend or do you want Ambassador Bodde to go in your place? She'd write her decision in the margin and you could act on her decision. As to substance, she might write, "I don't agree with this" or "Are you sure?" or "Come see me." It gave her an unfiltered communication with the working level desk officers and it gave them an opportunity to communicate directly with the assistant secretary.

Her other innovation was to have her daily meetings with her deputies in the evening at six pm, rather than in the morning. This innovation, quickly dubbed "evening vespers," was an excellent management tool. In addition to reviewing what had happened during the day, you could decide on a course of action for the next day. So you'd come in to work the next morning prepared, unless something happened during the night, of course. But the other advantage of an evening meeting is that it served as a catharsis. The Washington bureaucracy is a constant series of battles. You spend a great part of your day defending

Library of Congress

policies or trying to change policies. It is wearing and often very frustrating. George Shultz once complained that no issue was ever finally decided in Washington. At the end of a hard day it helped to discuss the daily struggles with your colleagues. It gave you the opportunity to test your ideas in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. You could also get her to weigh in with higher authority if necessary. She set the tone and there was very little backbiting or one upmanship. There was lots of ribbing and irreverence, which also helped.

Q: Okay, Gottlieb had come in saying Mulroney is on his way if you don't... And you're going to send the Vice-President.

BODDE: I got a call from the White House. The Vice President wanted me to brief him on the Canadian situation at lunch the next day. So I went over to the White House with the country director for Canada. Dick Darman was at the lunch too and he is one of those people who think they know everything and he tried to monopolize the conversation. I didn't mention that I'd been working on Canada for four days. Despite Darman the lunch went well. I spent a lot of time the night before reading up on the U.S.-Canada issues. We flew up the next morning on an Air Force jet. Secretary of the Treasury Baker brought along the under secretary of the Treasury for international affairs. On the way we discussed the upcoming meeting. Of course, we briefed the Vice President on trade issues but we also briefed him on other strategic and foreign policy issues with Canada. There were complications because the night before we flew to Canada, Secretary Shultz sent a blunt and rather undiplomatic letter to the Canadian foreign minister about acid rain. The Vice President read the letter on the plane going up and was very unhappy. At the meeting Mulroney chose to disregard the letter. He brushed the letter aside saying it must have been the work of some over zealous staff member and he was sure it did not reflect the thoughts of his good friend, George Shultz. The incident seemed to me to indicate that Shultz and Bush were not that close either. How would you like to be the Vice President

Library of Congress

about to undertake a sensitive mission and find out that the Secretary of State had stuck his finger in the eye of the Canadians just before you got there.

The Vice President and a few of us, including our ambassador to Canada, Tom Niles, met with Mulroney, and then we met with Mulroney together with his cabinet. Bush was somewhat taken aback in that he had expected to discuss big issues with global implications such as pending arms control agreements with the Soviets or our assessment of Gorbachev. What he got was a litany of complaints and bitching about every possible trade disagreement between Canada and the U.S. The Canadian trade minister dominated the meeting and talked on and on about cut flowers and shakes and shingles. I am sure the Vice President was wondering why we brought him up there to discuss this stuff. But he is a nice man and a born diplomat so he sat there and let them unload their grievances. He knew that his goal was to calm down the Canadians. He was successful.

While working on Canada I had an experience that was to have a negative effect on my future although I did not know it at the time. As I mentioned, the most important and divisive issue in U.S.-Canada relations was the controversy over acid rain. We simply were not living up to our treaty commitment to put up our share for the study of acid rain. The implication was that the studies would be the prelude to taking action to solve the problem. It was important enough that the President called a cabinet meeting to discuss the issue. Shultz and Roz were out of town, and I went with John Whitehead to the cabinet meeting on the subject.

Q: Whitehead was the assistant-

BODDE: Whitehead was deputy secretary. It's the only cabinet meeting I've ever attended. Lynn Pascoe was running the executive secretariat then. He called me beforehand and told me that Whitehead was unhappy with the briefing memos he had been getting. He thought they were sterile. I found out later that Whitehead resented being told by the State Department bureaucracy what he should say and warning him about the implications of

Library of Congress

doing some of the things he wanted to do. He told his aide that all he ever heard from the geographical and functional bureaus is why he shouldn't do something rather than proposing creative ideas. This was not a problem that would be solved by changing the memo's style, but I didn't know that then. The problem was that Whitehead wanted to go off on his own without taking into account the ramifications of his actions, especially those with negative foreign policy implications. So we took Lynn's advice and put the briefing memo to the deputy secretary into a more conversational tone. It was a big mistake and he didn't like our approach at all. From that day on I could never work myself out of that hole I had dug with Whitehead.

Our approach was to play on the President's affection for Mulroney. We told Whitehead that the other cabinet secretaries were going to oppose coming up with the money. The budget was tight and many of them did not want to spend money on an environmental issue. It was unlikely that the moral argument that we had a treaty commitment would change their minds. However, an argument that might convince President Reagan was that if we did not live up to our treaty obligations we would threaten Mulroney's political survival. Mulroney's was in serious political trouble at home. The polls showed his popularity way down. He had made a big thing in Canada about his close relationship with President Reagan. If we did not come up with the money, and stiff-armed him, there could be a vote of no confidence in Parliament, which he might very well lose.

Whitehead didn't like this approach, but he used it. And it was great, because after he made that argument, the President went around the room and asked each cabinet member for his or her views. Every one of them was negative. The Secretary of the Interior was really down on the Canadians. In effect, he said "The hell with the Canadians. They complain no matter what we do." The extent of the hostility was an eye-opener for me. Even Secretary of Defense Weinberger was negative. Finally, when they had all vented their spleen, the President said, "Gee, we wouldn't want to hurt Brian. We wouldn't want to do that" and he closed the meeting. So that was it. The decision was made. We were going to come up with our share of the money. Now we would have never won

Library of Congress

that argument if we argued on the merits of the case. But victory or not, it didn't sit well with Whitehead, and I paid for it a couple of years later. It was generally accepted that I would go out as ambassador to East Germany - I was a German expert and had been the Department's point man on the two Germanies for three years. Roz was trying to take care of her deputies as we headed toward the end of her tenure. But at the committee meeting to consider ambassadorial nominations, Whitehead shot it down. One of the senior people at the meeting came up to me the next day and asked, "What did you do to, John Whitehead?" But that's the way it is. And things turned out all right anyhow.

But the Canadian thing was a real eye-opener, and I've watched it with NAFTA.

Q: You know, the Canadians - correct me if I'm wrong, but - the Canadians seem over the years to play this poor little us and big you, and you've got to treat us extra carefully because you're so big and we're so small - that type of thing. And how did this play when you were dealing with this?

BODDE: I found a streak of anti-Americanism among most Canadian diplomats. Ambassador Derek Burney was different and things really got better when he came to Washington. But the Canadians have an identity crisis, and it's not uncommon. I call it the asymmetry problem. You have the asymmetry problem when small countries share a culture and language with a large neighbor. The Austrians have it with the Germans; the New Zealanders have it with the Australians. Invariably the large country's culture is overwhelming. Culturally, Canada can try to keep Time Magazine out and the U.S. TV programs out and they can subsidize their own magazines, TV programs and even their own movies, but they can't really stop the overwhelming impact of the U.S. culture. So they really have an identity problem. Sometimes they have legitimate arguments. It is true that when the U.S. economy sneezes, Canada's economy gets pneumonia. It happens and there is little that can be done about it. I don't expect that Congress is going to become more sensitive and consider how pending legislation is going to play in Ottawa.

Library of Congress

I'll give you an example of how intertwined we are with Canada. At one point I had to testify in Congress about the levels of water in the Great Lakes. It might sound strange that the State Department gets involved in such a technical issue, but the level of water in the Great Lakes is a big political issue on both sides of the border. The problem is similar to global warming. It may be created by the short-sighted actions of one or another country or it may be part of a historic global trend that is very difficult to reverse. In reality we don't know why these levels change and when you look over long periods of time, the levels change considerably, and they ebb and flow. Over time beach houses are stranded half a mile from the water on the U.S. side, and on the Canadian side the houses are being flooded or vice versa. There is a joint Canadian-American commission that works on the issues, but sometimes actions are taken unilaterally that have an impact on the water level along the other country's shoreline. We flushed out the upper Mississippi River basin and it had implications at both ends. It affected the whole Mississippi Delta, and all of a sudden the Canadians are sitting on dry land where they used to be at water's edge. There is a certain amount of duplicity on both sides. The U.S. or Canada turns off or diverts water flowing into the lakes without consulting, let alone agreeing, on a common approach. After being briefed by the desk, I went up to the Hill and gave my testimony. It went pretty well and I could handle the questions thanks to my briefings. I spoke about the joint commission and the importance of finding a political solution acceptable to both sides and I didn't try and get involved in the scientific controversy. But it is an excellent example of how entwined and entangled we are with Canada. And so what we do does affect them greatly, and sometimes what they do does affect us.

Canadian officials tend to whine a lot. I found most Canadians - I mean, I ran into lots of snowbirds over the years; I've been on cruises where there were lots of Canadians and there is no problem. But the elites tend to be hypercritical of the U.S.

Q: Unless they're in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where... It's the damndest thing.

Library of Congress

BODDE: I've found many of the Canadian diplomats and government people difficult to deal with because there is nothing we can do to abolish the asymmetry. Despite their paranoia, the U.S. is not going to annex Canada. It's interesting that the French Canadians seem to have less of a hang-up about the U.S. They know who they are. They know they're French. The four months certainly were a learning experience for me. Of course, the vast majority of the interaction between the United States and Canada takes place outside of the U.S. Government. A problem for the State Department is that the president or cabinet secretaries will pick up the phone and talk to their opposite number in Canada and take care of the big stuff. The State Department if it learns about it at all will find out later on. The DAS for Canada is often involved in matters that are usually outside the State Department's usual areas of responsibility, such as a merger of two companies in Canada that might run afoul of the U.S. antitrust laws. One thing for sure, the U.S.-Canada relationship will never be entirely easy.

Q: I want to ask one more question about Canada. Did the great "What if?" question come up while you were involved at all with Canada?

BODDE: "What if" question?

Q: Separation, a free Quebec. I mean, were we sitting around kind of wondering, well, God, what do we do if this -

BODDE: No, I think mainly we just wanted to make sure it didn't look like we were messing around in that internal issue. We were just onlookers. I was not aware of any contingency plans in case Canada fell apart. The general view was that it wasn't very likely to happen. It was more a case of the French Canadians using the threat of secession to force concessions from the national government. But it was certainly not an issue in which we felt that we had a role. We were very careful not to say anything that would irritate either side.

Library of Congress

Q: Why don't we just go back? We're still catching up a few things. I asked you about Petra Kelly.

BODDE: Oh, yes.

Q: Could you explain who Petra Kelly was?

BODDE: Petra Kelly was one of the original leaders of the Green Party in Germany. Her stepfather was an American military officer, and she had spent a good part of her youth in the United States. She was bilingual and, as I think I mentioned before, German politicians who speak good English are sometimes taken more seriously in the United States than they are in Germany. Kelly got a lot of press in the United States. She was never that important in Germany.

I went with President Reagan to the G7 Summit in Venice, and then we went to Berlin, where Reagan gave his "Mr. Gorbachev, Take Down This Wall" speech. Kohl was in Berlin with Reagan but he wanted a meeting in Bonn on his own turf. We had a meeting at the Bonn airport with Kohl. The only people in the room were Kohl and Reagan, and I think Jim Dobbins, who was DCM in Bonn, took the notes for our side. Of course there were interpreters and someone took notes for the German side. I accompanied the President as the area specialist. It was a disappointment because most of the conversation consisted of an exchange of jokes. All your professional life you wait to reach a position where you were in on the inner councils of government, and these two world leaders are telling each other lame jokes! I remember two of them because, at the time, the Pope had just made his first trip to Poland and everywhere he went he received a tremendous welcome. Kohl says, "Ron, what do you think of the Pope's visit to Poland? It's fantastic, a million people came out to greet him." And Reagan laughed and said, "If I could draw crowds that big, I would have stayed in Hollywood." I must admit that wasn't a bad line. Then they started talking about the situation in Rumania. Reagan told him that a Rumanian film director in Hollywood once told him the recipe for a Rumanian cake, "First," he said, "you steal

Library of Congress

a dozen eggs.” I thought, “Good God, all we need is for this to get out and we will have protests from the Rumanian-Americans, let alone insulting the Rumanian people.” What struck me was how vacuous the conversation was.

But yet another big issue between the U.S. and Germany was terrorism and our efforts to combat terrorism. Roz decided that it was a good idea to have me coordinate counter-terrorism policy for the EUR Bureau. We had problems because the Justice Department and the CIA wanted to put pressure on the Germans to turn over Arab terrorists they had captured to the U.S. They didn't trust the Germans to be tough enough and Jerry Bremer, the director of the counter-terrorism office in the Department, took their side. It is true that back at the 1972 Olympics terrorists killed and took Israeli athletes hostages, and the Germans completely mishandled the situation. Interestingly, Genscher was interior minister at the time and he was largely responsible for the debacle. However, this was a different government and we had no reason to believe that the Germans would cave in again. We were concerned with keeping Jerry Bremer on the reservation.

Q: Could you explain when you use the expression “off the reservation,” “keep him on the reservation” means that you were afraid that they would do things that really weren't in accord with regular policy?

BODDE: The problem is that for any office in the State Department or elsewhere in the U.S. Government that has responsibility for a single issue, that issue is paramount. The people in those offices want their issue addressed over all others. In such cases it falls to the geographic bureau to look at the proposed action in a broader context. We would tell Bremer or whoever, yes this issue's important, but we also have ABC and X, Y, and Z issues. If we do what you propose we risk doing serious damage to our position on these other important issues. Protecting broader foreign policy objectives often puts the Department in the position of being naysayers, and it's one of the reasons the Department gets a reputation for being too timid or being too careful.

Library of Congress

Still, it is our responsibility to point out the negative consequences of taking a particular action if that is the case. Often the proposed action has more to do with somebody grandstanding or showing off than it does with promoting U.S. national interests. And so Bremer, or his people, who were often more zealous than he was, wanted us to call in the Greek ambassador or some other ambassador and scream at him that his government should be tougher on terrorists. We might argue that approach doesn't seem to be productive, or we'd be better off if we did this or that.

We had had the disco bombing in Berlin, which we blamed on the Libyans. We bombed Libya in retaliation. But the biggest problem came when the Germans picked up a known Arab terrorist named Hamadi and his brother who lived in Germany. Hamadi was wanted for some major terrorist incidents, including the murder of a U.S. seaman aboard a hijacked aircraft. The CIA and the Justice Department wanted him extradited to the United States to stand trial, and the Germans weren't about to do this. We kept putting pressure on the Germans to make sure they didn't turn soft on us and let this guy go. The Germans response was, "We will try him under German law and justice will be served." To be honest, it was not just that people were worried about the Germans, but individual egos played a big part. Political appointees in the Justice Department wanted to get him back so they could prosecute the case of the century. They wanted to be on the cover of Time Magazine and Newsweek. Dewey Claridge at the CIA also got involved. Dewey was a cowboy and infamous as the guy who mined the harbors in Nicaragua. To these people, I was seen as defending the Germans and being soft on terrorism. Dewey and his friends at Justice tried to intimidate you. Well, I'm not going to be intimidated by those guys. I'd been on the sharp end of terrorist threats and I'm not soft on terrorism, but I was not going to destroy U.S.-German relations to satisfy their egos. There was no prominent American official that went to Germany that we didn't put a reminder in his or her talking points, to remind the Germans that we expected them to bring the Hamadi brothers to justice. They did, and they finally tried the guys, and they got 30 years, or whatever - they got serious sentences.

Library of Congress

One of the problems with terrorism is that various countries have different approaches. We suspected that the French policy was not to harass terrorists if they didn't conduct terrorist activities in France. It was sort of an unwritten rule, you know. We won't bother you. You can transit France or perhaps even live here, but the minute you do something in France, man, you're going to find yourself in deep trouble. Well, that wasn't an acceptable position to us. Many countries, including Germany, had citizens who were being held hostage by terrorists. However, there was considerable debate about how to handle the situation. How is the best way to get them back? Our position was that we would not negotiate to get hostages back. That was our official public position, but while we were taking a tough line in public, National Security Adviser Bud McFarlane secretly went to Iran and traded arms for a hostage!

I watched a TV program the other night on American hostages in Iran, and it is a dilemma for our leaders. When an American is taken hostage for political reasons and the Secretary of State or even the President meets with the relatives, it becomes a very emotional thing. The Secretary or President sits there and hears the pleas of the hostages' loved ones who are begging that the U.S. Government save them and do whatever has to be done. The correct official response may be that "We don't give in to terrorists," but that is very hard to do when you meet face to face with a hostage's immediate family. Reagan got caught up in this

At a chiefs of mission meeting in Hawaii, I had an informal drink one evening with President Bush and a couple of the political appointees. It was during the time when we were building up for Desert Storm. The President told us that when he flew into a military base he would meet with the troops and their families. They would call out to him, "Please take care of my husband" or "Please look after my sons, Mr. President." He said he would get choked up but tried not to show it. The press would have a hay day if he had shed tears. Remember when Ed Muskie was a presidential candidate and during a speech got teary-eyed over attacks on his wife. It was the end of his campaign. It was clear that

Library of Congress

George Bush really felt for these people. So when leaders are faced with a hostage situation, it becomes really terrible for they have to weigh the good of the families involved against the good of the nation as a whole.

Q: We can go a little bit more. Do you want to?

BODDE: Okay, sure.

Q: Well, let's talk about the Senior Seminar. You were at the Senior Seminar for what, one year?

BODDE: Yes, only one year because I was offered the chance to be ambassador to the Marshall Islands and I took it. Normally, it would have been for two years. The dean usually stays two years or more.

Q: The Senior Seminar.

BODDE: What happened is that I was leaving EUR. The new Administration was putting in their team, and I wasn't offered any ambassadorships. Somebody suggested it would be interesting to run the Senior Seminar. So I went to see Brandon Grove who was running the Foreign Service Institute. I'd known Brandon slightly for years. He liked the idea and the only question was that I had never attended the Senior Seminar. Well, Brandon, fortunately for me, said, yes, fine, and I spent a year doing it.

Q: This was '89 to '90.

BODDE: Yes, '89 to '90. Working for Brandon was a very positive experience. He had been to the Seminar and he cared about it. But he gave me a completely free hand in running the Seminar. So it was really fine. The fellow who had run the Seminar before me had made drastic albeit very good changes. His name was James Bullington.

Library of Congress

BODDE: It was back in the time when we had the limited career extension system. Well, Bullington didn't get an extension as minister counselor while he was dean of the Seminar. He was so upset that he retired immediately and didn't complete the course. They brought in Mary Olmsted from retirement to finish out the academic year. Mary had been to the Seminar and later was our first resident ambassador to Papua New Guinea.

Jim Bullington had done something very, very smart. He had changed the Seminar from a typical, State Department top-down operation to a down-up operation. That is, the members of the Seminar, the students - they call them Seminararians - were responsible for a large amount of the Seminar's content. The first thing students did when they came on board was to meet for a day with a facilitator and decide on what their priorities were that year. I would design one-third of the curriculum with courses such as public speaking, management, and leadership development. The students themselves would design the substantive two-thirds of the curriculum balanced between domestic issues and foreign policy issues. By consensus they would agree on the six or seven major categories and divide themselves up into committees to arrange speakers. My job was to give guidance and make sure that there was balance in the program. I added some new personal development programs. For instance, I introduced a segment to teach them how to testify before Congress. Most of us have no experience and we learn from doing it. We contracted with The Congressional Quarterly to run a week-long Seminar. We had congressmen and congressional staffers talk with them about the process. Everybody gave mock testimony and we videotaped them and critiqued their performances. I wish I had had a course like that before I began to testify on the Hill. In my day you learned by trial and error.

Basically it was up to the people in the Seminar to find the speakers. Now, I helped them with the ones I knew or I had some influence with. I also arranged for the two speakers to speak at the Senior Seminar Alumni Association. I got two friends, Paul Nitze and Colin Powell, to talk with them. But as I said, they got most of the speakers. The beauty of the

Library of Congress

system is that you draw on the networks of the 30 people in the Seminar, half of whom are from other agencies. The other agencies have much different networks. The FBI representative got the head of the FBI to speak. The others got their cabinet secretaries to speak. I got the head of the NSC, Brent Scowcroft, to meet with the group. All the military chiefs spoke to the group. In fact, the only cabinet member whom we approached who didn't speak to the group was Jim Baker. The downside is that arranging for speakers takes up a lot of time. But it's worth it and the result is a tremendous program. The members of the class are competitive, so they all want to get the best speakers for their segment, and because they have a stake in the program, there is much more enthusiastic participation.

Before the academic year began my deputy suggested it would be interesting to go see the Exxon- Valdez oil spill in Alaska. I had to figure out a way to get them up there to go see it. We had three military trips a year, one Navy/Marine, one Army, and one Air Force trip. We also took trips by ship courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard. I didn't want to use one of the regular military trips to go to Alaska. Then the Army colonel in the class told me that the Air National Guard has planes. I went over to see the general in charge of the National Guard office at the Pentagon. The general was interested in promoting the National Guard so he agreed to a plane and crew to take us to Alaska. The plane was one of those at Andrews Air Force Base used to fly VIPs. We took the group up to Alaska to see the clean up of the Valdez spill. Before we left the head of the Environment Protection Agency and other environmentalists spoke to the Seminar. So did the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. Only Exxon with its poor grasp of public relations sent over a public affairs hack. So we went up to Alaska with some background in the issues. We flew up to northern Alaska, to Point Barrow and Prudhoe Bay where the oil rigs are and the Alaska pipeline begins. Our pilot had been a commercial pilot in Alaska and nothing fazed him. The airport at Deadhorse was a few thousand feet shorter than usual due to repairs but it didn't bother him at all. The Alaska Air National Guard flew us in a C130 to Saint Lawrence Island where we could look across the water at Russia. We flew down to the end of the pipeline

Library of Congress

in Valdez and the Coast Guard took us out to the clean-up area where we took zodiacs to an island to see the actual damage. It was a real super way to start off the Seminar.

I figured out that the best way to ensure the future services of the National Guard was to add a slot in the Seminar for a National Guard representative along with the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard. We did and the National Guard has been taking the Seminar to Alaska each year. Of course, one of the inspectors raised the question whether we needed a National Guard representative in the class. But we held out and kept him.

I think I can safely say that future Seminars are not likely to have a year like my year as dean. In February 1990 the National Guard flew us to Bonn and Berlin just as the Wall was coming down. We met with West German leaders and West Berlin officials and politicians and then we went over and talked to the East Germans. It was before the referendum to unite the two Germanies took place. Whenever I run into Seminar participants from that year, they always mention the Berlin trip. When I came home my wife was eager to hear my impressions. It's probably one of my better predictions. I told her, "Honey, it's unbelievable. The West Germans haven't a clue how expensive reunification is going to be, and the East Germans haven't a clue how painful it is going to be." We also went to Hawaii for ten days on the Marine-Navy trip. We visited the submarine base at Pearl Harbor and the Marine training on the Island of Hawaii. We also landed on an aircraft carrier and drove the Abrams tank. We went to the nuclear lab in Los Alamos and studied inner city problems. We really had a sterling year.

It was a learning experience for me too. In the Senior Seminar the domestic side is an eye-opener for the Foreign Service people and the foreign affairs side is an eye opener for the people from the domestic agencies. I remember Brandon spoke to the group, and he said something about once you've been to the Senior Seminar, you will never read a newspaper the same way again. For example I read about things like farm subsidies, something I never paid any attention to before. This is because we devoted a whole segment to American agriculture covering subsidies and commodity markets and best of

Library of Congress

all we spent 24 hours on a farm and learned who it looks from the farmer's viewpoint. The other thing they all remember was the night they spent with the Baltimore police patrolling in squad cars. I think the Seminar, which, granted, is not cheap is one of the best things the Department does. All the FSO's I know would attended say it was probably their best year in the Foreign Service.

Q: I was in the 17th Seminar. One of the things that I thought about really - and not at the time, but afterward - was that there were a certain number of people who were put in there who were really getting ready to retire. I mean that was from our side, so that a certain amount of loss was made, because this was just a place that Personnel was putting somebody or they really hadn't thought it out. The other one was that on the military side, we didn't seem to be getting people who were on their way up the flag, I mean really going to be up to flag rank. It seemed to be at that time - I'm talking about '74-75 - it was not the caliber of people that were going maybe to the National War College. By your time - I mean, this was 15 years later - had things changed?

BODDE: Yes, they have and again the change has nothing to do with me. Basically, ninety percent of the Foreign Service Officers now are newly appointed OCs. They are sent just after they have been promoted and are not eligible for promotion for a year so they can focus on the Seminar. We had one FS-1, Charlie Ries, and he was the best student in the class. The group was hand picked and most of them were comers. We had a couple of people from other agencies who had clearly been a problem back in their home agency and the Seminar was a convenient place to dump them. I spoke to those agencies, and I told them, "If you do that again, your agency will lose its slot." We had a few of our own who were not so hot but in general they were very good.

The other problem we had was that some of the other agencies weren't sending senior people. They were sending the equivalent to FS-1's and not OC's. I told them, "You come up with the equivalent, and otherwise you don't get in." There were some complaints about that, but they did it. The military can't assign generals or admirals because they have to

Library of Congress

be in rank-designated slots. However, if they send us the real comers it will work. In my class the Army guy was on the promotion list to general but turned it down because he was going through a mid-life crisis. The Coast Guard guy is an admiral now, chief of staff of the Coast Guard. The Navy guy retired, and the Marine was going to retire after one more tour when he came to the Seminar. The Air Force colonel served a tour in Moscow as a special arms control inspector and then retired. So I would say that 40 percent of the military people made flag rank. The statistics that I looked at from earlier classes were somewhat better. In past years it was 70 percent. About 30 percent of the FSOs in the class became Ambassadors, and that's high.

Larry Eagleburger spoke at the graduation of the class before mine and when he saw that a number of the FSOs in the class were unassigned, he blew up. He wanted to know why the Department couldn't find assignments for people who are supposed to be the best we have. The personnel system got the message and together with my nagging all the Foreign Service Officers in my class were assigned when they graduated. There was a problem placing admin people in non-admin jobs but I did manage to convince the German club to take one of them as Consul General Stuttgart. Later, he was named ambassador in Iceland. My son, who is an admin officer, became a DCM at a young age but that's rare. Political officers are still the chosen few. So I think my class did pretty well. One thing struck me and you've probably noticed it too, that in the last few years, the Civil Service has become much more powerful in the State Department. I would guess some 30-40 percent of the State Department people in the Senior Seminar are Civil Service. When I was dean, there was one civil servant from the State Department and that had been the case for some years. The new ratio reflects the rise of the Civil Service in the State Department. Have you noticed it?

Q: I've been away too long to really notice it, but I do note that this is -

BODDE: Look here at FSI. How many FSOs are on the faculty at FSI? Certainly, not as many as there used to be. One reason is that an assignment to FSI is not considered

Library of Congress

career enhancing by most FSOs. The Peace Corps has become a primary training ground for faculty jobs at FSI. You have to reward officers by promotions and/or assignments if you want to attract the best ones. It's amazing that somehow the system never figures this out. Foreign Service Officers will do any job if they think that it will get them promoted, especially in the highly competitive climate of today. Now if you want people to run the motor pool, you just have to make it a requirement for promotion and they would line up to run the motor pool.

Q: I think I've noticed this, having also been there, that normally a job in Personnel in any organization is the kiss of death. I mean, for God's sakes, who wants to be in Personnel if you're really a hotshot? But I've noticed this even when I was not very astute, even very early on, I would see people I thought were really quite fancy in their careers, and all of a sudden I'd see they were in Personnel, and I said, "Hey, wait a minute. What is there about this Personnel?" And so when I was offered a job in Personnel, I said, "Yes, Sir!"

BODDE: Me too. I was a personnel officer.

Q: - because you can sort of not only help your next assignment, which means promotion and all of that, but you also understand how that particular part of the system that is so important works, which, I think, makes your point. I mean, you can get people in the Foreign Service to go into Personnel, which is normally not that creative a job.

BODDE: Right. Interestingly enough, they never succeeded in making the Board of Examiners (BEX) attractive. We should be putting our best people there.,

Q: BEX is essentially a parking spot. I served in BEX, and it was a parking spot.

BODDE: And that's crazy. These are the people guarding the portals to our business. The most important people for the future of the Foreign Service are the people who decide who comes in, right? I used to say we make the non-swimmers as lifeguards.

Library of Congress

Q: It was very definitely a place - medical problems, waiting to hear, they didn't know where they were going or what happened. I ended in BEX right after the Senior Seminar because I didn't have a job, and then I went on to Seoul, which was fine, but it was not a career enhancing job at all.

BODDE: And that I don't understand. Being an assignment officer is enhancing, at least for picking your next assignment, and the Senior Seminar should be enhancing. It should be a ticket for promotion. The old rules do not apply any more. For instance, you can be appointed an ambassador at counselor rank and not be promoted to minister counselor. Then if your time in grade has run out you must retire when you step down as ambassador.

In the old days, it was unthinkable that an officer of counselor rank would not be promoted to minister counselor if he or she was appointed Ambassador. It is much more difficult to know what will get you promoted now.

Well, I used to say that the Foreign Service is about the size of a small company in Iowa that makes plumbing valves, a small manufacturing company.

Q: It's no more than about four thousand officers.

BODDE: In my day it was even smaller at about three thousand. Yet we have a large personnel system and the teeth-to-tail ratio is enormous. I realize that a personnel system that must move people constantly to the far-flung corners of the world is more complicated than an equal-sized private company. Still, the Department makes it more complicated than it has to be. Over the years we have gone through numerous gyrations yet the quality of Foreign Service Officers hasn't changed in the last forty years. We recruited good people when I came in the Service and we get good people now.

Q: It still comes out at approximately the same people.

Library of Congress

BODDE: It comes about the same.

Q: They keep trying to make it be more demographically - -

BODDE: Well, part of it is a sign of the times. The Foreign Service must respond to the changes in society. The system must satisfy the demands of affirmative action and other programs to right the previous wrongs of society, but to do so obviously complicates things. Nevertheless, we shoot ourselves in the foot. For example, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to see that a system that requires officers to bid on jobs before they know whether they have been promoted that year is dysfunctional. Officers who were promoted will be unhappy if they are assigned to jobs below their new rank

Part of the problem begins when a new Secretary of State takes office. He gets his first briefing on the personnel system in all its complexity. I am sure that every new Secretary thinks, "Hey, I'm only going to be here for three or four years and I want to make my mark on foreign policy. I'm not getting into this can of worms." So the Secretary turns it over to the deputy secretary, who may or may not get involved. The problem is that the top leadership has never taken the Foreign Service personnel system seriously. On top of that, the demands on the State Department are greater and budget keeps shrinking in real terms. Until we get a Secretary that can convince the President to make the good fight, things are going to continue to deteriorate. Instead, each new Administration tinkers at the margins. As I said, Baker wouldn't even meet with the Senior Seminar.

Q: But I think this is very typical. What I get from my interviews was that there was a real distance, a real problem with Baker. People say he's a superb negotiator, and people who belong to his inner circle... I'm interviewing at this time Tom Niles, who has very high regard for Baker because he sees him fairly close up, but those who are a distance removed saw Baker with this group around him which wasn't telling him that the Germans might not go along. You know, things of that nature, and to me it's a major flaw.

Library of Congress

BODDE: I think it is. Shultz, for instance, met with the Seminar and Scowcroft spoke to them, as did a number of key political players. Tutwiler came over and spoke, but that isn't the same. Now, don't get me wrong, the measure of a Secretary of State is not whether or not he or she meets with the Senior Seminar. However, it does provide a clue as to how they view the Foreign Service. Tom did very well under Baker so I am sure he feels differently about him.

I think Baker was terrifically disconnected from the career diplomats. I think he was even more divorced from the building than Henry Kissinger was.

Q: I think so too, because I think Henry Kissinger came over from the NSC. He knew what was going on; he just got absorbed with secrecy, and particularly having a Nixon, you can't think of a more unholy duo than that. They sort of fed on each other.

BODDE: They fed on each other's paranoia. Amazing, just amazing.

Q: Well, why don't we pick this up the next time?

BODDE: Okay, which will be next spring sometime.

Q: Yes, doing '90 to... You went to the Marshalls when?

BODDE: In '90. So '90 to '92 I was in the Marshalls.

Q: Okay, and we haven't gotten to how you got the job and all that, so we'll start with that.

BODDE: Yes, and then '93 was APEC. We can look at that at the end.

Q: We'll pick that up then. Great.

***Today is the 8th of March, 1999. Bill, we're off to the Marshalls, but first you've got to say how this came about and then explain what the Marshalls are.

Library of Congress

BODDE: The Marshall Islands are one of the three Freely Associated States that are part of Micronesia. I have described Micronesia and the origins of the Freely Associated States when we talked about my time as director of Pacific islands affairs. Originally the Department did not plan to appoint ambassadors to the Freely Associated States. When we opened our missions in Micronesia they were headed by chiefs of mission but later the posts were upgraded to embassies. In 1990, I was here happily ensconced in FSI as the dean of the Senior Seminar, which is normally a two or three year assignment. But about halfway through my first year, Ken Hill, the senior assignments chief, called and asked me if I wanted to be on the list of candidates for ambassador to the Marshall Islands? I told him the embassy in Majuro was smaller than the embassy I ran 15 years ago. He said he knew that but he thought it was a good idea to keep my name in front of the ambassadors committee.

By coincidence, I had been asked by Jim Morton to address the graduating class of the Micronesian diplomatic training program. The U.S. was obligated under the Compacts to give diplomatic training for the Freely Associated States. After the ceremony I talked with Sam Thomson, who had been the first chief of mission in the Marshall Islands. He told me that things had changed a lot since I had been there in 1983 but that they still needed help in developing their economy. I thought to myself why not go out there and see if you can help. I had experience working with the developing Pacific island states and I know the President and many of the key players. After all, President Kabua and I were friends going back to the status negotiations. We should be able to work together and help the country develop economically. It was a mistake for a number of reasons. First, you should never go backwards in your career. Secondly, the Marshallese were not interested in advice, they just wanted us to give them more money. And most importantly, I hadn't really considered what my wife thought about the whole idea.

When I made up my mind to go, I simply ignored the signals my wife was sending me, by body language and whatever. She really was trying to tell me, without saying so, that she

Library of Congress

didn't want to go there. We had been back in Washington for four years, which was the longest period in our career in one place. She had settled in, but she was an old-fashioned Foreign Service wife. That is, she was ready to go with me to any post if I thought was good for my career.

We went to the Marshalls and we were both disappointed. The place was even smaller than I remembered and the huge amount of Compact money had corrupted the leaders and the society. I spent two years trying to convince them to be reasonable and invest in the country's future. They were spending the money like drunken sailors. They had an airline flying to Hawaii three times a week that was draining the budget. They went from one crazy scheme to another. The leaders were getting rich and malnutrition, social diseases, and diabetes plagued the society. The health and education systems were in shambles. As I told a congressional committee, we did more harm with the money than with the nuclear bombs we tested there.

The U.S. is renegotiating the Compacts of Free Association with the Marshalls and the Federated States of Micronesia. The U.S. has given the Marshall Islands almost one billion dollars over the last 13 years. That's for a country with about 50,000 inhabitants. Economically and socially the place is a basket case. How could that happen? Well, it happened because the U.S. did not provide oversight nor did we require accountability. We were worried about being accused of being neo-colonialists.

We spent two years in Majuro and my wife had health problems, so I was ready to come back after two years. When I told the Department that I wanted to come back, at first the Department was surly about it: "Well, you've only been there two years," and so on. So I said, "Well, my wife has been medically evacuated three times, and I think we had better leave. I came back, and a friend of mine, Dick Smith, who was the principal DAS, got me a job in the Office of Environment and Science and Technology. Actually it was pretty interesting, and I basically figured it would be my last job before I retired.

Library of Congress

Q: I want to go back to the time you were in the Marshalls.

BODDE: Yes, sure.

Q: What type of government did they have, and what was your role there?

BODDE: The Republic of the Marshall Islands has a democratically elected, single-house legislature. The president is elected by the parliament. In point of fact, the president was also the highest-ranking, traditional chief of the Marshalls. The Pacific island cultures have found a way to accommodate their traditional chiefly system with democracy. They usually elect their paramount chief as president or prime minister. So things go on pretty much the way they did before the introduction of democracy. However, this solution invariably leads to conflict when the president or the prime minister is challenged or criticized by the opposition. How could anyone dare oppose the paramount chief with all his or her mystical and religious powers? So there is a basic conflict between traditional power and democracy.

Amata Kabua was president when I was there and he died a few years ago. As the country's first president he proceeded to do the kinds of things that many Third World leaders do. He enriched himself, his relatives and his cronies. He gave his ego full reign. He created a national airline. The airline could actually pay for itself if its operations were confined within the islands of the Marshalls and maybe a weekly flight to its nearest neighbor, Kiribati. For ego reasons, Kabua wanted a national airline that would fly three times a week between Majuro and Honolulu. Every time the leased plane flew to Hawaii and back it caused a \$40,000 deficit in the budget. You don't have to do that too often before it runs into real money. After Amata Kabua died, his cousin, Imata Kabua, who was more corrupt and much more inept as a leader, replaced him.

My role as an ambassador? Maybe I had false expectations that it would be somewhat more than the usual bilateral ambassador. I expected to do the normal job of representing

Library of Congress

United States interests and reporting on developments that affected the U.S. However, I also thought I might help as an unofficial advisor on development questions to the Republic of the Marshalls (RMI). I had certainly more experience than anybody did in the RMI government. I found out very quickly that this was fine as long as I did whatever they wanted done. We ran into a serious clash when the RMI came up with the brilliant scheme of increasing income by selling passports. Under this free association agreement any Marshallese can enter and work in the United States without a visa. To protect ourselves we included a clause in the Compact that if you were a naturalized citizen of the RMI, you had to spend at least five years in residence in the Marshalls before you could enter the U.S. on a Marshallese passport. Well, they were selling the passports primarily to Asians who were not interested in living in the Marshalls for five years.

Q: Iranians too, weren't they?

BODDE: Mostly they were Asians. To start they sold eight of them. At first they wanted a million dollars each but they had to reduce their prices. That still added up to a lot of money and over time millions of dollars that were allegedly paid for Marshallese passports have disappeared. The foreign minister and other RMI officials came to see me after they sold the first eight passports to Chinese people. I told the Marshallese government that these people couldn't enter the United States on Marshallese passports. They don't fulfill the residency requirements in the Compact. I also told them that I would have to notify Hawaii and other ports of entry to be on the lookout. The foreign minister asked me not to do that but I told them that I was obligated to do so under U.S. law. I told him I represented the United States Government and I took an oath to uphold the law. Earlier, I had tried to convince President Kabua not to go down that path. I said to the President, "Imata, you can give away your passports, you can award them to people, you can even sell them, but you can't sell entry to the United States." I warned him that when a country cheapened its passport it becomes known as a sleazy country that doesn't care about its reputation. Well,

Library of Congress

my arguments made no impression at all and personal relations between us became very cool.

In the normal course of my duties I spent most of my time on three things. One was issues arising from the U.S. Army missile range at Kwajalein. Before we had an ambassador in the Marshalls the American colonel in charge of the base was independent. I had to bring him under my authority and to keep him from doing things that were likely to have negative political consequences. We had to make sure that the military lived up to what we had agreed to in the Compact of Free Association. For instance, we had agreed that revenues from the civilian telephones on Kwajalein should go to the RMI. All the Americans on Kwajalein used the military lines free of charge. We had to convince the colonel to see that revenue from pay phones on the base went to the RMI. Another time the military wanted to use spent uranium on the dummy warheads to give them more realistic weight. They said it was not dangerous and no one in the Marshalls would ever know about it. Right! Anyone who believes that is very naive. I vetoed the idea because our nuclear testing had already complicated U.S.-Marshall Islands relations. The RMI is a place where we have a nuclear history. We tested our nuclear weapons, including the hydrogen bomb, in the '50s and '60s in Bikini and other islands. That's why the name bikini is a household name, because it's a girls abbreviated bathing suit. The "explosive" bathing suit was named from the Bikini test.

Q: The Bikini tests, you're right, yes.

BODDE: In the course of testing we radiated a Japanese fishing crew and a number of Marshallese on some of the islands. We are rightfully paying hundreds of millions of dollars in compensation to the victims for that. Can you imagine, how this country, which is hypersensitive to anything nuclear, would react when they found we were using spent uranium in the dummy warheads. The one thing, Stu, you and I know from our business is that nothing remains secret forever. We had a lieutenant colonel on the embassy staff, Frank Moore, whose job was to liaise with Kwajalein. More was a very bright guy and since has made a brilliant second career in the computer business. Dealing with the

Library of Congress

Kwajalein problems made the job more interesting than it would have been if we were just another embassy in a small country.

Another area that involved the embassy was dealing with the unique issues arising from the Compact of Free Association. The compact is a very long and complex legal document. Interpreting and implementing the obligations on both sides took up a lot of the embassy's time. Finally, there was the usual workload of an embassy: political and economic reporting; representing U.S. interests; consular work, and persuading the RMI to vote with us on issues in the UN and other international organizations.

But it was not a happy two years. We met some very nice Marshallese and we had some good friends. The big game fishing was fantastic and sitting on the deck watching the beautiful sunsets over the lagoon had its moments. But it was basically watching a welfare-mentality society grow more and more greedy and more demanding.

Q: What about the Japanese? Were the Japanese working fishing rights and sort of cleaning out the waters or not?

BODDE: Yes, the Japanese gave some aid but they did not have a resident ambassador. For my first year there I was the only resident ambassador but then the PRC opened an embassy. The Japanese consul general in Guam covered Micronesia. Japan did a lot of fishing in that part of the Pacific but so did Taiwan, the PRC and Korea, not to mention the U.S. The Marshalls became a member of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Agency, and gained considerable income from licensing foreign vessels. The problem was that the Japanese insisted on bilateral agreements and by paying off powerful Marshall islanders they avoided paying the full price to the RMI government.

Q: One of the hardest things here is to deal with the problem of corruption, particularly when it's corruption with our money, essentially. How would you do it? One, would you

Library of Congress

be reporting this back? And if you did, what was the reaction you'd be getting from Washington?

BODDE: Yes, I would report it back in general terms, but I didn't get any reaction from Washington. I didn't have legal proof that would stand up in court but that could have been attainable if the U.S. Government pursued it. We certainly reported the waste but got no reaction. The basic problem was that the Interior Department was not auditing the expenditure of the Compact funds. We have the right to review the RMI's development plans but it was not done. When I reported back the case of an Australian who came to Majuro with a scheme to sell passports and establish a training college and garment factories that would use foreign labor. In other parts of Micronesia similar facilities make clothes, mostly with imported Chinese labor, under harsh labor conditions. There are such sweatshops producing Ralph Lauren and other well-known brands in the Northern Marianas and Yap. Under the Compact these products have free entry into the United States. Not only do these sweatshops exploit labor but very little of the money finds its way into the local economy. A few local people make a deal with the company and get rich.

Well, this Australian con man came to Majuro to work out a deal. He paid the representative of the Marshalls who was negotiating with him a \$50,000 consultant fee. When President Kabua told me about it, he said he was offered \$50,000 too. He said that he told them they could go to hell unless they gave him a million dollars! The idea that the person who was negotiating for the government should be paid a consultant fee by the person he was negotiating with did not seem to him to be a conflict of interest. Eventually the Australian had a falling out with his Marshallese buddies and he was arrested. He paid a fine and left.

Don't get me wrong. I didn't know of any cases of an American company that was violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act or I would have reported it to the FBI office in Hawaii. My main concern was the way the Marshalls were squandering the Compact funds, which were provided by the American taxpayer. As I said, we didn't hold them accountable and

Library of Congress

just gave them the money. By the way, Micronesia ranks as a recipient of U.S. financial assistance, on per capita basis, right after Israel and Egypt.

Q: Oh, really.

BODDE: We have given Micronesia over \$2 billion dollars over 15 years. It was not administered through AID but by the Interior Department. When Congress passed the Compact of Free Association Act, Interior officials told Congress that they would need extra people to administer the funds. The State Department opposed extra money for Interior and they didn't get any help for overseeing Compact funding and nobody did it. By the way, the reason that control of the Compact funding for Micronesia remained in Interior had to do with a power struggle in Congress. The committee that had oversight responsibility for these islands when they were part of the U.S.-administered trusteeship didn't want to turn over power to the foreign relations committee. They kept Micronesia in the Interior budget where they had control. But Interior didn't do anything. Interior was supposed to assign a person to the embassy staff in Majuro. I insisted that this person report to the ambassador. I showed them the President's letter outlining the Ambassador's authority. I told them that the person could report to the Interior Department as well, but he or she could not be independent. Interior wouldn't agree so they refused to send anybody to serve on the embassy staff. To make matters worse I got very poor support from the Department. Dick Solomon like most assistant secretaries for East Asia and Pacific affairs was not interested in the islands. He was primarily interested in China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia.

Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal in the Federated States of Micronesia and I used the South Pacific Forum meetings in Ponape to meet with Assistant Secretary Solomon and press our case. Dick Solomon is a good guy, but he just wasn't interested in the Islands. Our deputy assistant secretary was not very strong and our country director was very weak. I can tell you, in those inter-departmental battles, you need somebody back in Washington to carry your water or you're in trouble. So we got little support from Washington.

Library of Congress

Q: Well, what about Congress or the media or something? I would have thought that, you know, we're talking about money and you're talking about, waste, fraud and mismanagement. Wasn't it a scandal the way the money was being wasted and all? I would have thought that somebody from the media or a staffer from Congress would come and kick over some pails.

BODDE: Well, Congress was not interested in doing much because the people who were in charge of the islands, and their staffers, weren't interested in rocking the boat. They had been passing out congressional pork for years and they were not going to change. One staffer, Al Stamen, who is now the State Department chief for the Compact renegotiations, was quite good, but in general the Hill was not really interested in going after the Micronesians. It wasn't just Congress because there were many people in the executive branch who were just as happy to have things continue the way they had in the past. Once we tried to get a fix on how many federal programs were active in Micronesia. We were unable to get a final count but it was huge.

I am sorry if I sound like some sort of right-wing conservatives, but there's a whole American bureaucracy working on the islands that is interested in perpetuating these programs. At the very least the programs provide these bureaucrats with an annual visit to the islands. They get out the suntan lotion and bathing suit, put on a Hawaiian shirt, and go out to the islands. They spend a couple of days. The government takes them fishing and throws a tropical luau and the bureaucrats from headquarters think everything is great. They don't want to see these programs ever end. Whether they're effective or ineffective doesn't matter.

When auditors from various federal agencies came out they would look at the books and find them in such bad condition that they really couldn't tell what happened. The Marshallese in charge would tug on his forelock and say, "Oh, we're really sorry, we're just poor islanders. We've been trying. Just give us a break and we'll get these books in shape, and the next time you come back, we will be able to account for every penny." The

Library of Congress

bureaucrats go home with the promise that next time things would be different. Next time when the auditor came it would be the same but again there would be no penalty. It would work every time.

The responsible congressmen and staff weren't interested in changing things because they liked to go out there on trips, too. In their case they liked to play the big brother. You'd say, "We don't need this program. This program is a waste of money." I'll give you an example of what would happen, starting in the TTPI (Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands) days that set the stage for problems after free association. Congress passed a law providing grants to build hospitals in rural areas. Congress would tack on the American territories and the TTPI along with the 50 states.

They build a hospital to U.S. standards in Majuro, the capital of the Marshalls. It had five dialysis machines and other equipment that wasn't needed and could never be maintained. In the Federated States, they build hospitals in places that could not provide enough electricity to keep them running. The programs permitted little or no flexibility so the money was wasted. The kind of hospital you build in Nashville is not the kind of hospital you ought to build on a tiny island far from everywhere.

Q: No doctor would go out there.

BODDE: It's hard to get doctors. The U.S. Public Health Service assigned four doctors and a dentist to Majuro where they did an excellent job. But the Marshalls' government would use money from their budget for health care to send well-connected patients up to Hawaii for treatment. Yet every month they'd run out of penicillin and other basic drugs. The RMI did bring in some contract doctors from the Philippines. Generally the strategy of the Marshall Islands was to wait for Uncle Sam to provide whatever they needed. It created a self-destructive, spoiled child mentality.

I remember a meeting with the Micronesians during the status negotiations after I'd been to the Cook Islands. I told them that the premier of the Cook Islands, Dr. Tom Davis, had

Library of Congress

found an economical way to communicate with the outer Cook Islands. Davis was an exceptional Pacific islands leader. A New Zealand trained medical doctor, he went on to do postdoctoral study at Harvard Medical School and worked in the American space program. He has a real grasp of technical problems. Anyhow I told the Micronesians that Dr. Davis had found an off-the-shelf radio system in California for 10,000 dollars. Their response was, "We don't want any lousy 10,000 dollar radio system; we want our own satellite."

When I came back from my tour as ambassador, I called a meeting at the Department for all interested government agencies involved in the Marshall Islands. I gave them a straightforward, unvarnished this-is-how-it-is out-there talk. I don't think I made much of an impression. After I retired I was asked to testify before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Asia and Pacific. The committee was holding hearings about whether the U.S. should sign the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone treaty. When I was DAS in EUR we successfully opposed the signing of the treaty by the U.S. The reason was our nuclear cooperation with the French, but now the French were about to stop testing and had announced that they were going to sign the treaty. There was no longer a valid reason for the U.S. not to become a party to the treaty and I testified so. I used that opportunity to give a frank assessment of the situation in the Marshall Islands. Basically, my argument was that we tested there without the permission or approval of the people. We just did it. We radiated some of them, and some of them were forced to relocate to other islands. We therefore had an obligation to compensate the victims and otherwise assist them. I went on to say that, inadvertently, we had done more harm with the Compact money than with the bombs. I pointed out the miserable social, health, and economic situation and the widespread corruption. Well, the first person to pick up on my testimony was one of the American lawyers who represented the Bikinians. He was particularly sensitive to my comment that the American taxpayer would be unhappy that the Bikinians often held their village council meetings in Las Vegas. Somewhat later they got wind of my testimony in Majuro, and they passed a resolution in the Nitijela, which is their parliament, declaring

Library of Congress

me ex post facto persona non grata unless I apologized. So I've been PNGed from the Marshalls. I don't know if the new reform government in the RMI would ban me but I have no plans to go back in the foreseeable future.

Q: Did you run across something - I've had a little experience, because I went out to Ponape for a week with Jim Morton.

BODDE: Yes, I've known Jim for years and saw him in the Marshalls when he ran the diplomatic training course.

Q: And I was sort of the consular expert on how to set up a consular operation. And I did a class here. So I have a little feel for it, but one of the things that struck me was how the people - and this is the Federated States of Micronesia, but it's a mirror thing-

BODDE: Very similar.

Q: -how they were using all sorts of American money to basically travel to the United States and back. I mean, Continental Airlines, when I was there, was absolutely full, and the cost of the ticket is so expensive that there has to be something. I know the Micronesians are supposed to be great navigators and they love to travel, but Uncle Sam is paying their way. Did you find that travel was sort of one of the major expenses?

BODDE: Oh, sure. They would fly to Hawaii at the drop of a hat. Many of the politicians owned condos or houses in Hawaii. In addition to his Hawaii apartment, Amata Kabua had a place at a luxury resort in Fiji. No wonder that they use their limited funds for health care flying the well-connected people up for treatment in Hawaii.

Q: And their family with them.

BODDE: Sure, and if they're a chief's family or something, then it would be not just the immediate family but their extended family too. That's absolutely right. By the way, the Federated States takes the diplomatic training program much more seriously than the

Library of Congress

government does in the Marshalls. The RMI has sent most of President Kabua's children to Washington for the course. They sent one daughter who owns and manages a disco and when I was there they tried to send the winner of a beauty queen contest.

The Federated States have actually made better use of the program. On balance, the Federated States has been somewhat more sensible than the Marshalls, but they too have spent much of the Compact funds unwisely. The primary problem was that the money was spent to expand the government and thus provide employment for friends and family. The money was not used to create wealth by encouraging entrepreneurs. For the most part the economy of the Marshall Islands has consisted of recirculating the money from the Compact and not creating any wealth. They spent very little of it on promoting economic development.

Q: This 1990-92 period was interesting in that by this time the Soviet Union had fallen apart and one of our big concerns had been denial of access; I think that was our major foreign policy there, keep the Soviets from establishing a base. That was gone very obviously by the time you were there. And we weren't particularly concerned about the Chinese establishing a base. Maybe in the future that might become something. So did you find that the absence of even this, which was at least something, really took their whole raison d'être out of the business.

BODDE: Yes, the value of strategic denial declined with the end of the Cold War, but the importance of the missile testing range in Kwajalein remained. In fact, if the United States is going ahead with the development of an anti-missile defense system, it is likely to be even more important in the future.

To rap up the discussion of the Marshall Islands let me describe an evening with President Kabua shortly before I left. I had decided to leave the Marshalls after two years and this last encounter with President Kabua confirmed the wisdom of that decision. Ingrid and I were invited to a dinner in honor of the visiting Korean ambassador. A man who had just

Library of Congress

been indicted for drug dealing catered the dinner. It was held in a partially constructed building that the Marshalls Government was to rent after it was finished. The owner and the man who constructed the building was a Korean businessman who formed a partnership with the president's son, who was the foreign secretary. The Korean later fled the country leaving a trail of bad debts. The Korean's girlfriend, who owned a "B-girl bar" in Hawaii, provided the entertainment.

President Kabua arrived two hours late to show his displeasure with Korea because a Korean fishing boat had been caught fishing in Marshallese waters without a license. The food was cold and wilted and the mood sour. Kabua was in high dudgeon when he arrived and still angry that I wouldn't go along with his passport scheme. He immediately lashed out and said it was a good thing that I was leaving. As far as he was concerned, I was no longer a friend of the Marshall Islands. I thought back on the time when he said we could become rich together in a scheme to use Bikini to store nuclear waste. At the time I told him I came into government service without any money and I expected to leave the same way. He said the U.S. Army commander on Kwajalein and I opposed Marshall Islands economic development. He went on to express his unhappiness with me in general and claimed that I had instructed the U.S. Public Health Service doctors at the hospital to give white expatriates preference over the Marshallese patients. I denied his accusations, which were ludicrous, and we left the dinner shortly afterwards.

Not all of my experiences in the Marshalls were so negative. There were many Marshallese and resident Americans who were appalled by the social and health problems they saw around them. They, too, were disgusted with the squandering of Compact funds. Some ran as opposition candidates. Others devoted their efforts to non-government projects such as educating young Marshallese about ways to solve the desperate health and social issues. Other just tried to do their best to make the Marshall Islands government work better. Marshallese women were more impressive than the men. Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that the Marshalls are a matrilineal society. In the Marshallese culture rank and land was inherited through the mother and not through

Library of Congress

the father. One woman senior official was so good that every time she was moved from one ministry to another, the performance of the one she left noticeably declined and the one she joined noticeably improved. Some of the brightest and most ethical Marshallese and Americans left RMI government service because they could not condone what was going on. There are many good people in the Marshalls who know that changes in country's priorities are desperately needed. In 1999 a reform government was elected and it is trying to turn things around. The question is will the voters give them time to do it.

It's taken us a long time to move away from the Cold War mentality and it continues to this day. We still have a strategic interest, particularly if the U.S. is going to build an anti-missile system. Even if we did not want to remain in Kwajalein it would not be in our interest to have China testing missiles there. So in that sense strategic denial still is valid. These are arguments for renegotiating the Compacts when their time runs out. The Marshallese know they have a real bargaining chip in Kwajalein and they will use it.

At first the RMI recognized Taiwan and there was a Taiwanese aid program. Then they recognized the PRC and got some aid and most likely there were some payoffs to key people. The Chinese put an ambassador in Majuro. Last year the RMI reversed itself and the Marshalls once again recognized Taiwan. There have been accusations of big payoffs to Marshallese politicians to bring about the switch. Based on past performance there is good reason to believe they are true

Q: *Oh, yes.*

BODDE: But the denial argument. It's very interesting now because as we gin up for the new negotiations, denial should not be a major factor, because who are we denying it against? But Congress may still be in the denial mode. And the Marshallese will play Kwajalein to the hilt because they know it would cost a fortune to move that facility somewhere else.

Library of Congress

Q: Well, then in '92, you came back, getting ready to be precluded from ever going back to the Marshall Islands.

BODDE: That happened after I retired, and I have no plans to go back to the Marshall Islands. When we came back I briefly worked in the Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Science. One day I got a phone call from Lynn Pascoe, the senior DAS in the East Asia Bureau. He said Bill Clark, the assistant secretary, would like me to go to Singapore for a year as the first executive director of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) secretariat. I didn't know what APEC was and had never heard of it.

Q: Sounds like something dealing with oil.

BODDE: Right. It sounds like OPEC, the oil cartel in Vienna. In 1993 the United States was in the Chair of APEC and would get to name the first executive director of the secretariat, and they wanted somebody to go out and set up this new international organization.

Q: Well, now we're talking about the Clinton Administration coming in, was it?

BODDE: Yes, but Clark approached me during the Bush Administration before the presidential elections. APEC had been created in 1989 at a meeting in Canberra. Secretary Baker and Carla Hills, the U.S. Trade Representative, were instrumental in creating the organization. When they came into office the Clinton Administration embraced it. Clinton's people, like all Administrations, claim nothing ever happened before their watch. In point of fact APEC was well on its way and had made the decision to set up a secretariat in 1988, before the new Administration came in. But Clinton - I'll talk about that in a minute - did do a lot for it.

Interestingly enough, I think if Clinton hadn't been elected I would not have gotten the job. Not that it was a political appointment. Some others in the Department had another candidate, but for whatever reason, they dropped out when Clinton was elected. I was

Library of Congress

appointed in the interim before the new Administration had taken over. Bill Clark had chosen me because of my reputation as a manager. The U.S. was taking over the Chair of APEC in 1993 and would name the executive director to set up the secretariat. Sandy Kristoff, who was a DAS in the East Asia and Pacific Bureau, was the key person in the State Department working on APEC. She had come to the Department from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative where she had been a successful trade negotiator. She is now vice-president of international affairs at U.S. Life Corporation. Sandy had been at the 1989 founding meeting in Canberra. I was not her choice particularly - I didn't know her - but I was her boss's choice, so that was enough. Clark wanted someone to go out and set this thing up, and he wanted it to be lean and mean. He wanted it to be accountable, and not a full employment program like many UN agencies. That's what made the job so fascinating. By and large I really had a free hand to set it up the way I wanted, subject to the APEC Senior Officials who were my board of directors. Sandy Kristoff was the chair of the Senior Officials so I had pretty much carte blanche on how to set it up. It was agreed that the professional staff would be on secondment from the member economies - they're not called nations because Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China were all members.

My son is a senior administrative officer so I called him for advice. He made a couple very helpful suggestions. One was to talk to the inspector general and get some hints on what to look out for.

I asked the inspector general what kind of problems they find when they go around the world and what could I do to avoid these problems when we set APEC up. I found out, for instance, that petty cash is a recurring problem. It's the honey pot that tempts people and if you don't take it seriously you can get burned. You should have unannounced counts and make sure that the person doing the counting is not the person responsible for it. One of the directors in the Department's contracting office helped us set up a contracting process. He was a good guy and very cooperative. I told him that if possible, we wanted a procurement system less cumbersome than the U.S. Government's. He really tried and came up with a good system. However, it turns out that if you're taking money from

Library of Congress

one place - that is from member country's contributions, and then passing it on to others as grants, you end up with a very cumbersome system that looks remarkably like U.S. Government's system. We did not have such complications as affirmative action or equal opportunity protection or obligations to hire the handicapped because it is an international organization, but you still need a system of vouchers and accountability. We were lucky. The Department sent out a retired administrative officer, Pat O'Brien, to help set it up. He was a godsend. Within the year, we had a fully operating organization, with accounting systems, regulations, guidelines and even manuals thanks to O'Brien and the finance officer, Max Li.

Q: Well, what was this? You were setting this up, but what were you setting up? What was it supposed to do?

BODDE: Well, APEC was committed to trade and investment liberalization in the Asia-Pacific region. The secretariat was supposed support APEC activities and act as a clearing house for information. The problem was that some of the member economies were less than enthusiastic about APEC than the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Singapore were. The doubters did not want to see APEC become institutionalized or to become a competitor to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). In reality we were setting up an institution one way or another. The U.S. didn't want it to be another ineffectual international organization to provide jobs for Third World bureaucrats or a dumping ground for member governments. "Where do we put our turkeys? No problem, I got a job for them in Singapore."

Q: When you say putting your "turkeys" you mean your not very good people.

BODDE: Yes, not very good people.

Q: But who are well-connected or something.

Library of Congress

BODDE: Putting well-connected people there because they want to live in Singapore and get overseas allowances and so on rather than because they are the right people to do the job. It can be a problem. I didn't veto any of the people assigned to me as almost all of them were very good and a few were outstanding. The idea behind the United States assigning an ambassador to be executive director was to demonstrate that we took the organization seriously and expected the other members to do so also. All of my successors have been ambassadors or given ambassadorial rank when they were sent to APEC.

What does the APEC Secretariat do? It coordinates APEC programs and the work of ten APEC working groups. It also acts as a clearinghouse for economic information. APEC's goal, as agreed to by the leaders in 1994, is to create a free trade and investment regime among all eighteen members by 2020. This is going to be very difficult because in the meantime APEC has taken in countries like Russia. It's bad enough trying to do this with China, Taiwan, Thailand, and Korea, without bringing in Russia and others. This was done for American political reasons with little regard for the difficulties in integrating the economies of these diverse countries.

Two things happened early on. I attended my first Senior Officials meeting in 1992 in Washington and it was announced that I would be the first executive director. At this meeting I attended all the U.S. bilateral meetings as well as the multilateral meetings. A few months later I came back for the Senior Officials meeting in Williamsburg and Sandy Kristoff was in the chair. When I tried to sit in on the first meeting between Sandy as the U.S. Senior Official and another delegation, I was told that it was not be appropriate for me to attend as I was in charge of the secretariat. I decided that since they looked upon me as an international civil servant I was free to act as an independent agent. I knew that I was going to retire when I came home so I didn't plan to ask the U.S. for permission to do anything. Of course I would report to the Senior Officials, but so long as they did not object I was free. One of my primary jobs was to visit the member countries and publicize APEC.

Library of Congress

I conducted an extensive outreach program, giving speeches and press conferences to make the organization better known within the region. My other objective was to let them know that the U.S. was interested in the region and tell them what we were doing and why we cared.

The second thing was that Clinton gave APEC a tremendous boost. President Clinton picked up an Australian proposal that the Asia-Pacific leaders have an informal meeting in conjunction with the annual APEC trade and foreign ministers meeting. He invited the leaders to come to Seattle for the meeting.

Q: I've been interviewing Winston Lord, and we had a roundtable also with Warren Christopher, and this apparently was felt to be one of the crown jewels, the fact that they were able to get Clinton to start going to this.

BODDE: Did they mention that there was great debate whether Clinton should do it or not. I seem to remember that in the beginning the State Department wasn't too enthusiastic but then again success has many fathers. Clearly it was enormously important. It was the first time since World War II that the President met with such a wide array of Asian leaders. Remember, with the exception of China and Japan, maybe Korea, the leaders of most Asian countries are not going to get together with the President of the United States very often. In Seattle they agreed to meet the next year in Indonesia and since then they have met every year. Clinton missed the 1995 and 1998 meetings, but he was at all the others.

I certainly agree with both Lord and Secretary Christopher that the picture of President Clinton together with the leaders of China, Japan and the Southeast Asian countries had a galvanizing effect on the Europeans.

Q: That was in Vancouver, wasn't it?

BODDE: No, this one was in Seattle.

Library of Congress

Q: Oh, Seattle, I mean. Well, they're all the same.

BODDE: If you're from the East Coast. But anyhow, what was fascinating was that that picture came out and jump-started the Uruguay Round of international trade negotiations that were being held up by the Europeans. Well, when they saw the picture it dawned upon them that the U.S. has other trading options.

Q: We have two coasts.

BODDE: Another important development was that the APEC members had agree to appoint a group of wise men to look at where APEC was headed. The U.S. appointed Fred Bergsten, the director of the International Institute for Economics, a Washington think tank. He worked at the State Department a long time ago, and he's been an undersecretary of Treasury during the Carter Administration. Fred was elected chairperson by the wise men and he pushed the free trade agenda. Without Fred there wouldn't have been a free trade agenda. He got it through his committee of wise men, and then at the meeting in 1993, in Seattle, he pushed, first with the ministers and then with the President. The meeting was really neat. I sat next to Secretary of State Warren Christopher at this meeting and it was a nice way to finish my career. I was irritated with Christopher because at one point when he was in Singapore for a post-ASEAN meeting he didn't visit the APEC secretariat. It was important symbolically, because the foreign minister of China and other foreign ministers came by. Here the U.S. was in the chair and our own Secretary of State couldn't find time to come by. But it wasn't the end of the world.

APEC got an enormous boost from this meeting in Seattle, and, when he engages himself, Clinton has been very effective. When he engaged, things happened. In Seattle Fred Bergsten presented the report on behalf of the "wise men." The ministers sort of patted him on the head and said that's nice and sent him to look into the matter some more. Then Fred's report went to the leaders and they decided to take the report and use its recommendations. The leaders instructed the wise men to use the next year to come

Library of Congress

up with recommendations for implementation. They did that the next year in Indonesia with Clinton pushing. Fred's report called for free trade and investment by 2020, and Clinton got it through, with some help from the Australians and others. But without dynamic leadership by the American President, in APEC nothing happens. He didn't go to the meeting in Kuala Lumpur because of the war in the Gulf. He sent Gore, and the other members, particularly Japan and China, did some backsliding. They will do that when the U.S. President is not there to hold their feet to the fire. The problem is that while President Clinton is really effective in foreign policy when he engages himself, he's not really a foreign policy President, which presents problem for United States foreign policy.

Q: Bill, could you give me a little rundown on the countries? I mean, from your perspective, what they were contributing, what they were doing, what weren't they doing - just briefly how you saw the major countries.

BODDE: At that time, and it's changed since -

Q: Now we're talking '92.

BODDE: It was just the calendar year '93, but I've followed it closely since then and I've written on it a lot since and so on. There was what I call the spectrum of enthusiasm for free trade. The most enthusiastic were the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Then there was the next tier, sort of in the middle: Thailand, Indonesia. Then there are the countries that have little enthusiasm for trade and investment liberalization at home: Japan, Korea, China, and Malaysia. Malaysia would like an Asian-only organization. When you go back to the pre-APEC days, Shultz had spoken about it, but it was primarily an Australian-Japanese proposal. The Australians originally saw it as an organization without the U.S. At that time it was the Japanese, not wanting to alienate the United States, who insisted that the U.S. be part of the organization. And so the U.S. was invited to the founding meeting in 1989. China and Taiwan and Hong Kong didn't come in until '92. Korea negotiated their entry.

Library of Congress

The APEC economies account for \$15 trillion dollars of trade a year. Clearly an important trading bloc.

Q: Did Mexico and Chile play a part? I'm thinking those are two big powerhouses.

BODDE: They wanted to become members, and in '93 we were pushing to have Mexico come in because of the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) which also included the U.S., and Canada. Mexico was accepted in 1993. The Indonesians and the Australians, for purely political reasons, were pushing Papua New Guinea for membership. Even though Papua New Guinea had not reached a stage of development that would be appropriate for membership in APEC, it was voted in. The big battle was over Chile. We were not enthusiastic but did oppose Chile's entry. For some reason the Australians were against it. Chile was voted in and the Australian prime minister, was very unhappy. Four Latin America countries are members. The biggest mistake was taking Russia in because it will be very difficult to integrate Russia given the chaotic state of the Russian economy. The U.S. pushed it for political reasons that had nothing to do with APEC. The argument I made in 1993 in my speeches was that APEC was in its infant stage and you can't load all this extraneous baggage on without endangering the baby. We should let APEC accomplish what we set out to do, and then you can add new functions and counties. One thing the Asian members were worried about is that the APEC culture would change if you added Latin American countries. I think they were right because there are tensions in U.S.-Latin American relations that do not exist in U.S.-Asian relations.

Q: Okay, then in '93 what happened? Or after '93?

BODDE: After '93, I came back. It ended in December of '93, and we left on Christmas Day, actually. I asked for a meeting with Singapore leader Lee Kuan Yew when I was leaving. He saw me alone as a gesture of appreciation for what I had done for APEC.

Library of Congress

Secretary Christopher, Winston Lord and everybody involved, I must say, couldn't have been more generous in their praise at the November 1993 APEC meeting in Seattle. The Indonesian started it off and all the other ministers joined in to thank me for what I had done and commented on how much had been done in a short period of time. Some of the Asians actually came up to me privately and said, "You know, you've set up some strong rules of accountability for the secretariat. We appreciate because it would be very hard for us to take these measures. We are glad you did it because we know it is necessary."

Q: So then what happened?

BODDE: I left there. What has happened to APEC or what has happened to me?

Q: To you.

BODDE: To me, I came back and within a few weeks I was in the Job Search Program and retired in April '94. And that's my story.

Q: Well, maybe this is a good point just to turn it off.

BODDE: Entirely.

Q: Wait, well, just tell me, have you been involved in any of these things since?

BODDE: Oh, yes. Actually, one of the ironies is that in 33 years in the Foreign Service I spent one calendar year in Asia. Yet many of the things I have been involved with since I retired in 1994 have been concerned with Asia and APEC. I've done consulting and have written on U.S. -Asian economic and political relations as well as on APEC itself for numerous publications. I also wrote a book, *View From the 19th Floor: Reflections of the first APEC Executive Director*. My office at the APEC secretariat was on the 19th floor and overlooked the Singapore harbor, packed every hour of the day and night with ships

Library of Congress

carrying cargo. I used to say, "It's trade, Stupid. That is what we are here for." The Institute for Southeast Asian Studies published the book.

That one year changed my life. For the last four years I have been teaching a course at the University of Hawaii. The course is part of a Japan and China focused executive MBA program. When we were back in Singapore a few years ago I visited the APEC secretariat which now takes up three floors. There are more countries in APEC and more people working at the secretariat. There are still the tensions. Most of the members do not want to see another Brussels, that is, another European Union, where power is centralized in an international bureaucracy. They don't want that. So they worry about strengthening the secretariat. At the same time, APEC has become more complex.

The best thing I did for the whole organization, the thing I'm proudest of, is that I got them wired. I fought to get money to connect the secretariat and the member economies by e-mail through the Internet. I put in this new telecommunications system, over the opposition of few of the Senior Officials who didn't want to spend money on it. It's the best thing I did, because now you can go into the web page of APEC and get documents and do all kinds of things. In the process I found out how competitive the telecommunications business was when we put our proposal out for bids. And of course, I had to make sure that I would not be accused of picking an American company, so I appointed a committee and asked all interested members to send a representative. Most of them did and the committee chose AT&T. So that was probably the best thing I did for APEC.

A friend of ours, Ira Wolf and his wife, stayed in our house while we were away for two and a half months. I don't know if you know Ira. He was an FSO and now he is on the Hill. Anyhow, when he mentioned to people that he was staying in Bill Bodde's apartment, they said, "Oh, the APEC guy." But that's the way life is, and I have no complaints. It was a great way to end my career. If I had ended it just leaving the Marshall Islands, I would be a lot less prosperous and a lot less happy camper. And my wife and I often say, if we hadn't gone to the Marshall Islands, we wouldn't have been back in Washington in 1992 and Bill

Library of Congress

Clark wouldn't have been available and we wouldn't have gone to APEC, so it was all part of a-

Q: *The Greater Scheme.*

BODDE: Yes, Greater Scheme. Remember at the beginning of this interview I told you how my kids and wife were so enthusiastic about going into the Foreign Service back in 1962. Well, our daughter, Barbara, only spent one tour with us in Vienna before settling down in suburban Washington. Since then she has acted as GSO to the rest of the family as we bounce around the world. Both sons joined the Foreign Service. Chris has specialized in counter-narcotics work in Latin America. Peter is in the Senior Foreign Service and has served in senior positions in South Asia and the Department. Ingrid and I are still bitten by the travel bug and lecture together on international cruises. So I guess you could say that the enthusiasm has held up pretty well.

Q: *Great.*

End of Interview